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THE ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AT KARACHI

IMPRESSIONS

BY MARGARET E. COUSINS, B. MUS.

My first impression of this, the ninth of the Women's Conferences, is that its place of meeting, Karachi, is very, very far away from Madanapalle. We travelled so many days and nights that it seemed as if we would never arrive. But we reached that city at last after heat in Madras, cold and rain in Agra and a visit to a grey and tear-stained Taj Mahal, after bitter weather in Delhi and sand across the desert between Delhi and Karachi. It is much to say that the experiences and the enjoyment of the Conference was worth all the trials and expense of the long double journey.

About 200 women had gathered from all over India as delegates, two from the Malabar coast, Kamaladevi from Mangalore, two from Baluchistan, 12 from Hyderabad, Deccan, many from Bengal and the Punjab, and some from Gujaret, Baroda, the C. P. and Bombay. It was an interesting point in itself that we invaded and took possession of the New Student's Hostel of the D. J. Sind College as our camp, with two delegates in each of the boys' rooms. Quite comforatble it was, supplemented by a large shamiana tent in its compound as the camp dining room. It was very helpful of the Principal to put the whole College at the disposal of the women's Conference. The Standing Committee held its sessions for three days in the large College Library; the open Conference sessions were held in the Assembly Hall of the College, which admirably suited the purpose—speakers, office-bearers, standing committee members of the Constituencies on the fine platform, delegates in the body of the hall, visitors in the gallery; while the interesting and admirable exhibition of

Sindhi Home industries was in another block of the College buildings. It is a sign of the times that 80 girls are now students of that College though ten years ago there were barely eight.

. The President of the Conference was a Parsi, the Chairman of the Committee a Brahmin, the Secretary a Brahmo, the local Standing Committee member a Christian, and there was the strongest and the most influential group of local Muhamadan ladies I have so far worked with in our women's Conferences. These included Lady Hidaytullah, Mrs. Tyabji (daughter of Sir Akbar Hydari) Mrs. Haroon, Mrs. Hamid Ali; Miss. Ferojuddin the first lady graduate from the North West Provinces and an eloquent orator; Mrs. Hussain of Lahore and many other notable Muslim women. In political questions such as our women's demand for joint and not communal electorates our Muslim sisters hold the trump card in our conference discussions. United we march as far as possible, but when they cry a halt we have to concede or break the unity of our women's ranks, for they plainly state that if we do not concede they will walk out. Our Conference Statement on the J.P.C.R. as it effects women is the Greatest Common Measure of the unity of the women of the two great communities on the thorny questions of nominations, reservation of seats for women, joint or separate electorates, etc. That we held together amicably despite differences was the triumph of the Conference diplomats. The presence of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu at the Conference was a source of great strength. She has the right and beautiful word for every occasion. The newest feature of the year's gathering was the visit of two most prominent English women and their arrival by aeroplanes. Dr. Maude Royden, a Christian woman Purohit, as I may call her, and Mrs. Corbett Ashby had unselfishly given up all their Xmas engagements to fly to India to bring greetings of good will and offers of service from our sisters of 26 women's organisations in Britain. It had taken them only five day's of flying with each night spent in a hotel on land. Surely such journeys are miracles, and this flight of women to women was of the very essence of the Xmas spirit— "Peace on earth and good will to men-and women." They paid the heavy expenses of that flight themselves. The Conference supplied their needs for their stay in India only. They are charming women and impressed the sincerity of their mission on all who met and heard them. They were surprised at the prefection of organisation and the fine speaking of our Conference, but thought there was not enough discipline in listening

attentively and renouncing the temptation to private conversations with neighbours. They said publicly that the strongest impression they received was of the strength of the national demand for Purna Swaraj; and yet it is a subject on which there has never been a discussion or a Resolution all these years at these Conferences, but Truth will out.

The Subjects Committee had pages and pages of Resolutions sent to it by the 118 Constitutent Conferences but it decided to concentrate on four only for each section for discussion, Educational, Social reform, Labour and Franchise. Those which produced the most heated and interesting discussions were co-education, women teachers for primary schools, birth control, Reform of women's Inheritance and other legal rights, the conditions of women miners, and a sharp but significant clash of opinion on one paragraph in the draft Statement on J.P.C.R. in which the rank and file on the floor showed that they thought the framers had conceded too much and they took the bit in their mouth, bolted, and threw out the whole paragraph. The subjects for special work during the coming year are compulsary primary education, Legal inheritance Reforms, and the new Village Industries Association's work in conjunction with Gandhiji's scheme.

The week had its off hours filled with social entertainments, special lectures, sight seeing, and some aeroplane joy rides. Outstanding were the delightful day's picnic on the Sunday in an island "manora," in the harbour. 250 people were taken there by steam launches and picturesque sailing boats, and treated to a sumptuous lunch and tea by two Muslim hostesses. The time was rounded out by music and paddling in the sparkling Arabian Sea, and the final hour and a half was spent by the appointed representatives of the Conference, and the Women's Indian Association in drawing up their Joint Statement on the J.P.C.R. in a romantic cave. It was there we instructed the two English visitors how it was impossible to accept nominations for Legislatures from a Government which was keeping a nation in subjection against that nation's protests. A second notable event was a Drama about a Limbadi heroine in which all the characters were dressed in Sugali costumes. It was most picturesque and novel, acted entirely by High School and College girls for the first time before a mixed audience. I long to see it reproduced in Madanapalle some time. Then there were special lectures by Srimati Sarojini Devi, and a sermon in a Church by Dr. Royden which were high lights of the week. At the camp

itself the delegates gave an imprompt entertainment on the first night of the old year and ushered in the new year with gifts and good wishes as midnight sounded.

A special feature of the Conference was the publication for the first time in the Conference annals, of an issue of the local newspaper "The Sind Observer" fully devoted to the Conference and the Women's Movement, also the publication of a brochure of every extract from the J. P. C. Report relating to the particular interest and status of women—a quite valuable compendium of political information.

These conferences are the cement of a nation that is being unified by all India gatherings. Women who count in the progress of India come from all corners of the land, meet and form friendships, gain inspiration for local schemes through interchange of experiences, learn proper conduct of meetings, necesseary methods of voting, power to hold together, to give and to take, and to sink the personal in the common good. Each Conference is an Education and an Examinatination in itself, and each sends its delegates back home proud that their local constituency has taken its worthy share in creating and carrying on such a nation-building movement.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN HINDU LAW.

The laws of a people are the best index of their character. The position of women in Hindu Law has not been properly understood and appreciated by critics who blame that ancient Hindus treated women as slaves and degraded their status and place in Society. It is alleged that Hindu women were looked upon as goods and chattels and were dealt with as such. Historically that allegation cannot be sustained and I would try to show that the attitude of the Hindu Scriptures towards the fairer sex was not what it is sometimes considered to be. A deep and intelligent survey of the old tenets, the Dayabhaga and the Mitakshsera laws relating to the Hindu womens' rights over property cannot but convince that the legal and economic status of the Hindu woman, as conferred on her by the ancient Hindu law-givers, was far above that occupied even to-day by the modern emancipated women in the most advanced European Countries. It is no wonder that people labour under the misconception mentioned above for it must naturally be well-nigh impossible for those born and brought up in a modern state with its developed form of society and government to realise the condition of insecuritv and constant struggles which heralded the dawn of civilisation. The primitive man had not only to wage war with the forces of nature & brute creation but also with his fellow men whose savage instincts for spoil and strife rendered existence precarious, and in case of women and children impossible. But it goes to the credit of India that it held the torch of learning and civilization and light while the rest of the known world was plunged in utter darkness and barbarism.

Before coming to the main theme of our subject it would not be out of place is this connection to note the attitude of other nations towards women before the mediæval period. The ancient Romans and Greeks regarded women as a part of their property and sold or lent their wives to their friends either for pleasure or procreation. Their position was subordinate and they were not allowed to mix with men except on days of festivals and religious celebrations. In Sparta all marriageable girls used to assemble in a dark room, sparsely attired, on stated occasions, which the boys entered and selected for their wives from amongst them such as they could lay hold of. Girls used also to appear naked on certain days of

festivity and wrestle in a public assembly promiscuously with boys of equal age with themselves. The patriarchal system prevailed equally among the Hebrews (whose original home was Egypt) and no distinction was made between dependants and belongings. Among the Arabs, before the advent of the Great Prophet, the view of womanhood was the lowest possible. She had no voice in any matter concerning herself. An Arab was entitled on the death of his father to marry all or any of his step-mothers. Female infanticide was prevalent and many fathers used to bury their daughters alive as soon as they were born. In the house of her husband, as under the Romans, she was not treated in Arabia as a useful and respectable member of society but rather like a slave or a mere chattel or beast of burden—and a child-producing machine, & fit only for kitchen and domestic work. The emancipation of women from this degradation was affected by Islam which designated woman "*as the dearest friend, a safeguard against sin, a counterpart of man—susceptible of all healthy and salutary influence, the fountain of love and affection mixed with guidance and teaching for the younger world.*" According to the holy Koran "woman is a rocky fortress against Satan, a lighthouse of virtue and continence, one who can alone save man from ship-wreck while tossing among the strong waves of passion, one whose pure love transforms the brute into an angel." The Hindu Shastras also point out that "woman is the most exquisite and finished product of nature, whose one kiss accompanied with pure and faithful heart brings a treasure of happiness to man and seals the two hearts into one" Law as understood by the Hindus, is a branch of Dharma. It is on this account that according to the true notion of Hindu law no distinction can be made between moral and legal obligations. To the Hindu mind patriotism, legality, tradition, constitution and right are all included in the one word: "Dharma."

The history of Hindu law is the most wonderful phenomenon in the annals of the world and of human institutions. Egypt and Babylon, Assyria and Persia, Greece and Rome have all passed away without a vestige remaining of their ancient institutions and religions. But so far as India and its unfortunate Hindu-population are concerned, the tragic (or rather comic) tenacity with which they have stuck to old institutions and old law is really astounding. It is however a great mistake to assume that the declaration of the perpetual dependance of women in Hindu jurisprudence implies any degradation. It is only meant as a measure for their protection—for they are by nature weak and unable to bear the turmoils of the

world and stand against its terrors and temptations without guidance and control. As a matter of fact the Hindu view of woman is the grandest and highest, and she has not been neglected in any sphere of activity. I would proceed to substantiate this proposition by giving illustrations from the various branches of Hindu law viz., inheritence, partition, maintenance, residence, adoption, guardianship and marital relations.

The Hindu law of inheritence is based upon the principle of consanguinity. The father is born as the son. The daughter is equal to the son. "As a son, so does the daughter of a man proceed from his various limbs"—says Vrihaspati. This persistence of self in the life of children and identity of materials of the body continues to the fourth generation i.e., upto the great-grandson. Upto that the body is the same; after that there is difference in body. Upon this physiological idea is the theory of inheritence based by the ancient Hindu law-givers. As regards the daughter, however, on marriage she leaves the father's *gotra* and practically becomes the daughter of another. Hence as long as there was any descendant in the male line, upto a great-grandson, the daughter could not be an heir. This shows that the Hindu law followed Nature and was not artificial, unnatural and cruel—as it is represented to be or as is administered in modern Courts. In the Smritis, there is no mention of the theory of Spiritual benefit. The heir did not take because he offered *Pinda*, On the contrary, the rule was that he who took wealth, had to offer the *Pinda*. The right of the widow to inherit is expressly provided by all the Smirtikars and she comes in after the great-grandson. The daughter ranks next to the widow—the unmarried excluding the married. On marriage the wife assumes the gotra of her husband and she is classed amongst his Gotraj Sapindas. In the limited space at my disposal, it is not possible to deal with the question of female heirs exhaustively. What I intend is that their right is recognised by all the schools of Hindu law. In the Daya bagh five females designated as Sapindas are the widow, the daughter, the mother, fathers' mother's mother, and father's father's father's mother. In the Madras school, sister half-sister, son's daughter, daughter's daughter and brother's daughter are also included as heritable Bandhus. In Bombay, Berar and Sindh subject to the *Mayukh*, the wives of the Gotraj Sapindas are themselves treated as such and take their husband's places in the line of heirs. As such many other females also come in as heirs e.g,, sons' widow, paternal uncle's widow etc.

Coming to partition, we find that the right of woman is recognised by formally alloting special property to her upon a family division. Subject to a local law or usage to the contrary, the following female relations are entitled to a share on partition :—

(i) On a partition between the father and his sons, or between the sons, their mother and grandmother are entitled to a share which with the Stridhan received from their husband or father-in-law must equal a son's share.

(ii) Unmarried daughters are entitled to quarter of a son's share.

(iii) On a partition between her sons or grandsons, a widow is entitled to a share equal to that of a son's son. The Hindu theory of maintenance also is founded upon the dictates of natural justice and moral duty. Wherever a person is disqualified by reason of the nature of the estate or his own disqualification (whether personal or sexual) the shastras afford him the solatium of maintenance. Even where there is no joint-family, the law of necessity enjoins in certain cases the duty of maintaining others. Such is the duty of the husband and the father. There is a personal obligation to maintain aged parents, wife and unmarried daughters, sisters, daughter-in-law, step-mother, other co-parceners widow and even the mistress of a Hindu (if she is kept by him till death and remains chaste) are entitled to maintenance out of the estate. So far as residence is concerned it is laid down that the widow is as of right entitled to reside in the family-dwelling house. This right cannot be defeated by transfer of the house and in the case of ancestral family-house she cannot be evicted even if the transfer be for legal necessity. (vide A. I. R. 1927 Lahore 218).

As to *guardianship* next to father, the mother is entitled to be the guardian of her minor children and even her remarriage does not deprive her of it. In this respect a step-mother has been preferred to the paternal uncle, maternal-grandmother to a paternal-grandfaher, father's mother to a paternal grand-uncle and mother's sister to a father's brother. In matters of *adoption* also women have been given substantial voice and power. In early times children irrespective of their sex were taken in adoption and this is recommended by Nanda Panda Pandit according to whom the adoption of a daughter is equally conducive to spiritual efficacy since both the gift of a daughter in marriage and birth of a son to her are spiritually meritorious acts and children of both sexes are necessary to

free a person from the torments of Hell. The waman's right of adoption is based among others on the following text of Vashishth: "Man formed of uterine blood and virile seed proceeds from his mother and father (as an effect) from its cause; therefore the father and mother have power to give, to sell, and to abandon their son. Let the women neither give nor receive a son except with the assent of her husband." The interpretation of this text has given rise to a diversity of views among the different scholars regarding widow's right to adopt, which is however recognised by all.

Last but not the least comes the much-discussed and misconceived question of marital relationship in Hindu law. As Dr. Gour points out in his Hindu Code, "the sage idealises marriage as a sacrament and the savage practices it as a pastime." Marriage according to Hindu Shastras is a holy union for the performance of religious duties. It is not a civil contract as in English or in Islamic laws but is one of the *Samskars* which has the same effect in the case of women as the *Upanayan* (thread-ceremony) has in case of men. During the Vedic age marriage was compulsory, without which no one was allowed to perform any sacrifice. But the Vedic marriage was between adults and the wife selected her husband. The practice of holding *Swayamvara* was in vogue. The institution of early marriage is of a later growth and seems to have come into existence due to the advent of foreigners and received support from the popular cry "give the girl no chance to go wrong." According to *Vijnaneshwar* all Hindus must adopt four orders in life (i) *Brahamcharya* (that of celibate or student; (ii) *Grihast* (that of the house-holder); (iii) *Vanprastha* (that of the hermit); (iv) *Sanyas* (that of the ascetic); Thus women were not mere shadows of their husbands as the general belief seems to be. A Hindu woman has at most three stages to pass through in life. She begins it as a maiden under the care and control of her parents, then she enters into matrimony: she becomes a wife; and if she happens to predecease her husband (a contingency which is so earnestly desired by her from the bottom of her heart) she is spared the miseries and privations which are incidental to widowhood—a state so very painful and taxing that the unfortunate woman sometimes welcomes death in order to get rid of it. Hence it was that on the husband's death, the wife must immolate herself upon his pyre. This was the ideal termination of conjugal happiness which even the Rig-veda enjoined in the following hymn, "Om: let these women not to be widowed-good wives adorned with collyrium, holding clarified butter, consign themselves to the fire, whose original element is water." In as much

as it is a sacrament, the nuptial tie is permanent and indissoluble. It ca admit of no divorce. The effect of marriage upon the wife is to transfe her both bodily and spiritually from her paternal family to that of he husband. As observed above she adopts the gotra of her husband an becomes united to him in flesh & blood." During the husbands life-time he is to be regarded by the wife as a god and the wife is declared to l allowed better half of her husband equally sharing his joys and sorro the fruit of pure and impure acts and no sacrifice or religious rite to her apart from the husband's. This is the ideal of Hindu womanhooc of which Sita, Savitri etc, have presented examples which find no parallel in the history of the world. This is the view which leads to several results Being the union of two souls, the death of the husband does not set the wife free to re-marry and during the life-time there can be no divorce for whatever reason.

The last mentioned contingency has of late been the subject of much controversy. Widow remarriage alredy found place in the Statute book and the advocates of divorce legislation say that in actual practice the Hindu wife (unless she be forfunate enough to win the affection and good-will of her husband) is at present absolutely a slave. The husband can desert the wife for no fault of hers, can re-marry while the first wife is alive, can disappear from home without any thought of family, can commit adultery even in his wife's pressence, can keep a concubine under the very same roof and still the wife dare not protest or have any remedy. He may, they say, be a drunkard, a lunatic, a criminal and in short may give her any treatment or cause her bodily harm and mental agony but still the wife should not think of getting away from him. The argument is not without force but it has to be submitted, with due deference, the extreme cases apart, a general introduction of this provision would undermine female sanctity and fidelity as well as solidarity of the Hindu house-hold Our ancestors never intended that the women should occupy such a low & dependant position in society. On the contrary in many respects the Hindu woman fares much better than her more highly civilised English sister. This is what John Stuart Mill says in his excellent work on the *subjection of women.* "An English woman" observes the great writer, "can acquire no property but from her husband; the moment it becomes hers, even if by inheritence, it becomes, ipso-facto, his. In this respect the wife's position under the common law of England is worse than that of Slaves in the laws of many other countries. By the Roman law, for example, a slave

might have his peculium which to a certain extent the law guaranteed to him for his exclusive use." Thus the persons tempted to impart Western notions in aid of reforms must bear in mind that the higly advanced western legal conceptions as regards women's rights in property have their own baneful disadvantages e. g. woman is denied the right of owning the property jointly with her husband. This is not so in Hindu law where women can posses separate peculiar property of their own to which the name of *Stridhan* is appropriately applied. Manu whose authority in Hindu law is almost supreme thus defined *Stridhana:* "What was given before the nuptial fire, on the bridal procession, or in token of love; what was received from a brother, mother, or father are considered as the six-fold (separate) property of a married woman." This definition is illustrative and not exhaustive. There is ample evidence in the Vedas to show that in early times women pursued independent occupations and acquired gain by them.

From what has been set forth above it becomes abundantly clear that the position of women was not ignored by Hindu jurists and they did not belittle her place in society. They fully realised that woman is the chief vivifying and disturbing influence in life which might make or mar one's career. It is pretty obvious that in those days of the Vedic period, the glory of which still surrounds the country like a halo, women freely took part in the social and political activities of the country. Purdah system was unknown and they were subtle students of philosohy-enjoying equal right and freedom with men in all fields of activity: Social and Political. The existing Social evils that have gradually crept into our midst are eating like a canker into the very vitals of our existence. We should give up the misconceptions prevailng all round and try to eradicate the evils. We should help women to realise that the future of India lies largely in their hands- for as wives and mothers they have the task of training guiding and forming the characters of the future rulers of India. As Manu says, "Divine blessing abide in that house-hold where female members receive due honour: where they are not honoured, no act or ceremony bears its crop of fruit; that family perishes in no time where females pass their days in sorrow; it prospers all along the line where they do not. The good fortune of the family rests in them, for they keep up the line; all honour is due to them, for they are the lights of the house-hold-the females and the fortune of the house-hold, there is no distinction between the two."

DURGA SARAN AGARWAL,

B.A., L.L., VAKIL;

The Women's Consultative Committee On Nationality Created By The Council Of The League Of Nations.

By Madeleine Z. Doty

The 84th Council of the Legue of Nations is over. It had many important questions before it, chief of which was the problem of the Saar. But in spite of its absorption in political affairs it was not allowed to ignore the world-wide attacks upon the rights of women. The Council took cognizance of the unrest upon this subject by authorizing the distribution to the next Assembly of any recommendations that women's organizations might present with regard to the status of women—and, in particular, their recommendations with regard to the Montevideo Equal Rights Treaty and the Montevideo Equal Nationality Treaty.

It will be remembered that in December 1933 two Treaties deisgned to raise the status of women by means of international agreement were considered by the Seventh Conference of American Republics at Montevideo. One of these Treaties—on equality in nationality—was signed by nineteen of the American Republics and has since been ratified by the United States and Chile. The other Treaty, outlawing all discriminations based on sex, was signed by four Governments: Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay.

It will also be remembered that last September at the instigation of the Women's Consultative Committe, the repesentatives of a large number of countries asked to have the Montevideo Nationality Treaty considered by the League of Nations. In response, the Assembly of the League placed the subject on the agenda of the 1935 Assembly.

But besides getting equallity in nationality on the agenda, certain members of the Women's Consultative Committee also succeeded, last September, in inducing the representatives of ten countries to ask that "the entire status of women, giving particular, attention to the Treaty signed by four governments at Montevideo (Decemer 1934) to remove all legal distinctions based on sex" be placed on the 1935 agenda. As a result,

ne League Assembly will consider next September "the entire st
women," and the demand of women to be treated as equals.

At the recent Council meeting question of the status of women was gain taken up—this time from the point of view of having adequate naterial for the Assembly. The Danish delegate, Mr. de Scavenius, econded by the Czechoslovakian delegate, Mr. Benes, urged that the Vomen's Consultative Committee be asked to make a report. The ecretary General of the League then suggested that the Council authorize him to circulate to the Assembly any statements he might receive from women's international organizations setting out their views on either nationality or the whole status of women. This proposal was agreed to by the Council on January 14th.

This action by the Council gives women every where in the world an unusual opportunity. The response from women's international organizations has been immediate. We quote from a letter to the Consultative Committee from the President of a leading women's nternational organization:

> "I have just got the statement saying that the question of the whole status of women will be on the agenda of the September Assembly. This is a very great achievement, indeed. I am convinced that we can make a very big thing of this; that we *ought* to make it a big thing. I am deeply convinced that this is our great opportunity and that we would lose a victory for a whole age if we should act like many bodies who *never* see their chance and who never seize it when it presents itself.
>
> "We must create a *United Women's Front* for this occasion,—world-wide and comprising every possible women's body. This is a thing worthy of all our efforts. I shall consult with my co-workers. The main thing at present, it seems to me, is to call a preliminary meeting to plan the campaign. I am at your disposal for it."

From a country in which women have lost nearly all rights, comes an unsigned letter from a group of former feminist workers, telling of their gratitude that the feminist flag is still flying at Geneva. The letter concludes:

You certainly have a moral support here. We shall continu[e] to work for a practical suppport."

"The endeavours of women here are limited by the very ba[d] economic situation of most of the women who could hel[p]. The greater part have lost their jobs; are unable to secure ne[w] work and are deprived of all income. This compels them t[o] refrain from all expense, even from a ride on the tram. Onl[y] with great personal sacrifices is it possible to maintai[n] international relations. In doing so they run the risk of bein[g] suspected of being 'internationally infected'. The presen[t] silence of so many of the former workers in the internationa[l] women's organizations does not give any clue as to their way of thinking or inner conviction. As things are today, they are simply unable to say and do what they think and want. This cannot be overcome by any great personal courage since the outcome would be a perfectly useless martyrdom."

From the United States, where the encroachments upon the right[s] of women have made less headway than in Europe, comes a letter from a[n] officer of one of the feminist organizations:

"The work of the Women's Consultative Committee in forcin[g] the nations of the world to discuss women's rights; to listen t[o] women in the face of the attacks upon their liberties in so man[y] countries, is a marvellous thing for women everywhere."

From a former feminist leader, now in exile, comes an offer of help:

"I congratulate you. I hope we shall soon hear from you how women can secure the harvest of this success. We are ready t[o] help if our help is wanted."

Among the women who worked with the Women's Consultativ[e] Committee, during the recent League Council Meeting, for world adoptio[n] of the Montevideo Equality Treaties, were: Frau Lillian von Matsc[h], Vienna (Chairman Propaganda Committee of the Women's Consultativ[e] Committee created by the Council of the League of Nations); Miss. L. C. A Van Eeghen, Doorn, Holland (Assistant Honorary Secretary of Women['s] Consultative Committee); Dr. Renee Girod, Geneva (Honorary Treasure[r] of the Women's Consultative Committee); Frau Ellen Hrup, Copenhagen (Member Drafting Committee of the Women's Consultative Committee);

ss Alice Paul, Washington (Member Drafting Committee of the Women's nsultative Committee); Mrs. Helen Hoy Greeley, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, ernational jurist; Miss Madeleine Doty, New York (former General ecretary of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.)

The Propaganda Committee of the Women's Consultative Committee iet upon the conclusion of the Couucil meeting and sent letters on behalf f the 45 million women represented by the Committee, to the President of ie Council, M. Terfik Rustu Bey; to M. de Scavenius, of Denmark, and 1. Benes of Czechoslovakia, thanking them for their assistance.

The Committee also appointed a sub-committee to gather material or the Assembly. The Committee felt that it would be extremely valuable f all women could unite in making a report. There is no doubt that all vomen are agreed as to the hardships women are enduring today, articularly in those countries where the women's voice counts for little, f at all. In most countries women are suffering set-backs in those rights hey have gained. In democratic little Switzerland, for example, the Canton of Geneva, the only Canton that paid its women teachers the same s its men teachers, has just decided to reduce the women's salaries rather ian the men's salaries. Nearly everywhere it is like this. The women, e the first to suffer. They are thrown out of jobs right and left; married omen are not allowed to work; they are told to get back to the kitchen id the nursery; their opinion is not considered; they are put before the w in the same class as children.

It is these injustices and discriminations that must be assembled and resented to the League—the only existing world body to which such iatters can be brought. It is woman's opportunity to demand her rights, er human rights, even as man has demanded his. Women have the pportunity to declare that a new age must be brought into being, where human beings, men and women alike, shall be treated as equals, with ual rights before the law.

Herewith attached are facts about the two Equality Treaties which e on the agenda of the coming Assembly. Will you help us in preparing ir report by sending an account of any discriminations against women your particular locality? Please send also an account of any edorsements iat have been given to the two Equality Treaties by the women of any rganization of which you are are a member.

WOMAN'S STATUS IN TIBET

THE RECORD OF "AN ORDINARY TIBETAN WOMAN"

BY RIN-CHEN LHA-MO

I am a woman of Kham, the eastern and most populous part of Tibet. Some of yo writers have written of us with knowledge and sympathy. They have known us and they hav liked us. But they are few, and the others seem to have said just what they liked or what th thought would attract notice. Some of the statements made about us display great ignoranc and others, malice. Some are wrong but harmless; others made me laugh at the absurdity of them; still others made me angry. Why should people write falsehoods about us, why shou they write at all things they do not know? Many books would have to be written by man kinds of people before my country was justly appreciated abroad. But that will come in tim and the sooner if the Tibetans would write about themselves as the Chinese and the Japanes have long done. Why should I myself not write a book?

Almost everybody who came to my country wrote a book or an article about it some where. To write a book was not in itself very dificult, though it might be another thing to get anobody to read it. But my book would at least be of interest as being a book about th country by a woman of the country, especially as no woman of my race had ever done suc a thing before. It was an astonishing idea to me at first, but I soon fell in with it. I wa used to being astonished. My whole life was unusual. I had married an Englishman; n Tibetan woman had ever done that before as far as I know. And I had got used to foreig ways. I had, for instance, got used to shaking people by the hand; to your evening gown which make a human being look like a stork; and, after a toss or two, to your high-heele shoes. And in more important matters I saw that what might seem impossible to one of was the ordinary thing with you. It even seemed that some of you did not believe anythin to be impossible. I heard that a scientist was trying to invent a telephone with which talk to ghosts. What was merely writing a book compared to that sort of thing? Thousan of books on all sorts of matters were, I heard, written by women in your country.

I suppose our distant country holds little interest for your public except for wh strange things can be written about it, and so you get a strange picture of us.

With us neither the one sex nor the other is considered the inferior or the superior. M and women treat each other as equals. The women are not kept in seclusion, but take f part in social life and in business affairs. Husband and wife are companions and partne but the husband is the head of the household, and not the wife, as some of your writers hav it. The status of women in our country is much the same as in yours.

The wife manages the household. She holds the keys and also usually takes charge of the family money, and her husband consults her in all his affairs. They consult each othe they decide everything together. Grown-up sons and daughters are also consulted. Th family decides its affairs as a whole. The daughters help the mother in the management of

the household, and she may even put one or other of them in practical charge of it. So the Tibetan woman from her childhood learns to be useful and self-reliant and capable. She is at ease with men, for she has mixed with them, with her brothers and boys in general, on an equality from the start.

The Tibetan woman is not work-shy. The lady of the house will sweep the floor as well as any domestic, she does not consider it derogatory in any way. Servants are treated practically as members of the family.

Domestic work is done by the women, the wife and daughters and female-servants. Women do the cooking, sweeping and water-carrying. They spin the yarn and make the cloth. Sewing, however, is done as much by the men as by the women. Much of it has to do with sewing in leather, which is man's work. The men make our sheepskin clothes, boots, leather bags for cereals and such things. Milking is done by the women. Cutting firewood and gathering fuel is done by both. Sheep shearing is man's work. Sowing, reaping, threshing is done by both. Ploughing is man's work. Hunting and trapping is invariably done by the men. Women never take any part in slaying anything. Workers in metal, gold, silver, copper, iron are always men. Women help in the building of houses. In business affair, trade, buying and selling and barter, women take as much part as men. It is not rare to find some women more competent than men in such things. It is a question of individual capacity. We are used by our upbringing to dealing with affairs.

The wife takes her share in the management of all the family's affairs, and in the absence of her husband, or if she is a widow, she manages the whole estate, employing men and women, directing this and that. Husbands rely greatly on their wives, just as their wives on them.

The wives of the Kings and Princes and chieftains of Kham take their share in State affairs. All these chiefs have, in my own generation, been deposed as such but many of them still remain in official capacities. There have been cases of their wives taking the predominant part. Perhaps the chief has little interest in administrative work, his mind may be on other things and his wife will deal with affairs for him. Sometimes a chief has no son but a daughter only. In such cases she does not, on marriage, leave the family. The husband is brought into her family. On the death of her father, she, and not her husband, becomes the chief, but she hands over the administration to her son, when he grows up. Widows generally manage affairs during the minority of their sons. You will frequenty see women managing large properties and dealing with all sorts of affairs with ability and success.

The women of Tibet are strong and capable, and you cannot safely ignore them as of little account. They are not ignored at all, but exercise great influence in all walks of life. Yet, in the most important matter in her life, the Tibetan woman is not supposed to be consulted at all. Her marriage is arranged for her. The idea is that it would not be right to talk to her of it, for it would distress her, the thought of leaving her home, her father and mother, and she would refuse to go. So the marriage is arranged without her knowing of it. It is kept secret from her and sprung on her at the last moment. All is arranged, she has no choice, it is her parent's will; indeed, the will of Heavèn, everybody gets married and so on. So she weeps and marries. Girls often twit each other at random: "Don't you know you are marrying so and so next week?" And the girl is indignant or blushes. Such is the theory; but, of course, the bride

is often in the secret, too. And there are also runaway marriages. The young people love each other, and perhaps fear parental consent will not be given, so they elope and settle the matter for all concerned. Apart from the A-ni, or nuns, there are no women in Tibet who go through life unmarried, such as you have in such numbers, either from necessity or choice. All the women get married except those who have dedicated themselves to the religious life.

Some of your writers say that polyandry obtains as a form of marriage in Tibet. It does not. One writer, who did not go to Kham, and speaks from hearsay only, says it is universal in Kham, and that is from where I myself come. It is not true. I did not even know there was such a thing as polyandry until I came amongst you and learnt you believed it to be prevalent in our country. I am not impressed with the arguments brought forward by these various writers in support of their contentions. The basis of the argument of the one is often contradicted by another. One says there are less women than men in Tibet and hence polyandry. But another says there is a surplus of women owing to so many of the men, the priesthood, being celibate. As I see it, polyandry is against human nature, and so could not be a form of marriage general to any people. Cases of individual laxity, taking a polyandrous form, might, of course, occur anywhere in your country as well as in ours. It is not a question of theory, but of fact. Polyandry is not a Tibetan form of marriage. I am a Tibetan, and I know of no case of it.

Nor have we polygamy. I do know of a few cases of it, but it is very rare. We are neither polyandrous nor polygamous, but strictly monogamous.

Some foreign writers have said that immorality is widespread in Tibet. It is untrue. The traveller must not ascribe to a whole people the laxity of a few individuals. Nor, should he, as many writers do, confuse us with others. There are a number of tribes on the borders of our country who are not pure Tibetans. Some are closely allied with us, others are widely different. This or that tribe may or may not be lax of morals, may or may not have this or that curious custom. I do not know. Our people are not immoral. The standard of morality is nowhere in the world higher than in our country.

One writer bluntly misconstrues our folk-dances. But there is nothing immoral about them, nothing even unseemly. Your dances on the other hand are frowned on even by a section of your own people. And your ballroom dress is to our eyes astonishingly indecorous. Yet you would be angry, and rightly so, with anybody who misconstrued your dancing. You would say that either he had been grossly misled or that there was something wrong in his own mind.

We have our bad men and bad women, as you have, but there are few, and there are no professional prostitutes in Tibet such as you have in your country. Our girls are chaste and our married women faithful. The Tibetan wife is loyal and steadfast. These are characteristics of our people. Husbands and wives do not abandon each other. They hold together through all the trials of life.

Infidelity is very rare in Tibetan wives. If it occurs you may or may not have a tregedy. It depends on the individual concerned. We have such tragedies now and then. There are men who will kill each other over a woman, and there are women who lose their senses often without conscious intention on their part. It may simply be their beauty which they cannot help, and so we say that a woman, however good, must first reincarnate as a man before she can attain Buddha-hood. In this respect only is woman considered inferior to man in our country, and it has not much bearing on practical affairs.

Infidelity on the part of husbands is less rare, but still it is rare. In small communities everybody knows what everybody else does, and an aggrieved wife will perhaps take her women friends with her and seize the woman who has led her husband astray, and take her home and make her promise, on her knees before the altar, not to do it again. Or the wife will perhaps just seize hold of the woman and pull out her hair in handfuls.

Tibetan ideas on marriage are strict. You cannot marry a cousin or any relative, even the most distant. Widows are not supposed to re-marry, but many do it none the less, it is not forbidden. They make their own re-marriages. Others, on the other hand, become nuns. Most do neither the one nor the other.

The Tibetan woman does not smoke at all. Few even of the men smoke. It is an alien habit. But many of the men and some of the women take snuff. Women may drink wine, but they seldom do so to excess. It is considered as disgraceful for a woman to be drunk as, for a lama (priest). The Tibetan woman uses neither powder nor rouge. In some districts of Kham, not in my own, the women cover their faces with a black pigment, to protect the skin against wind and sun. Some foreign writers say that the purposes of this is to conceal beauty lest the lamas be led astray. It is as wicked as ridiculous to say such a thing.

Our lamas need such protection no more than do your priests. Nor does a coating of paint, black or red, conceal youth and beauty. Black paint on the face is not beautiful, it is not meant to be, but your paint and powder, which is so meant, can be just as unpleasing. The face of a stray dog which has been rummaging in a mill—I have seen heavily-powdered faces amongst you that suggest the comparison.

Of good looks the Tibetan woman has her full share. She is on the average as pretty as your women are. I know it, for I have seen women of many races. But I do not say it in local pride. Good looks add to the beauty of life, but they are of no importance compared to goodness of heart.

The average European or American is not good-looking according to our ideas. We consider your noses too big, often they stick out like kettle-spouts; your ears too large like pigs' ears; your eyes blue like childred's marbles; your eye-sockets too deep and eyebrows too prominent, too simian. But I ought not to say such things, for I am plain myself and we have a saying, that before laughing at others' faces your own should be as beautiful as an image; at others' clothes, your own should be of the very finest fabrics; at others' horses, your own should be like a lion.

The average Tibetan girl is pretty. Good features, faces glowing with health and happiness, clear eyes, small, even white teeth, these are common in Tibet. And you will see some women who are quite beautiful—some girl of the people striding along with easy gait, the picture of beauty of face and figure, or some lady of quality in her silks and satins, serenely lovely. Our Tibetan costume becomes almost anybody. We have a saying that people's beauty lies in their clothes, the tree's in its leaves.

If this story is dull, that is because I am dull. It is a simple story that I tell, and that is all I am capable of, for I have no learning. It is the record of my mind, what I know and what I think, the mind, indeed, of an ordinary Tibetan woman for there is nothing unusual about me except my fate which has taken me from my own environment and brought me into contact with the great world outside it.

OUR EUROPEAN LETTER

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The next Assembly of the League of Nations is likely to witness an important innovation so far as women's problems are concerned. It is probable that the whole question of the status of women throughout the world will be placed on the League agenda for discussion. Miss. Doty. of the *Women's International League*, has stated at a meeting held in London that international women's organisations have been asked to prepare statements setting out the political, economic, and legal difficulties facing women in every country. The Council of the League has decided that these reports shall be considered by the next Assembly. Any discussion that takes place is bound to be of enormous interest just now when, in Germany and other Central European countries, the position of women in social and political life has received a setback. In the case of Germany, for example, a big reduction is recorded in the number of women taking higher education. It is part of the Nazi policy to restrict university studies so as to open possibilities of future employment for men, and to discourage them for women, whose duties are looked upon as chiefly domestic. Compared with the winter term of 1932—33, the number of women studying in 1933—34 has fallen by 22 per cent in the faculty of medicine, 57 per cent in law, and 48 per cent in philosophy.

British women will continue to press for the recognition of their own nationality if they marry a foreigner, and women's organisations in England are asking that this important subject shall be discussed at the next Imperial Conference.

Young Egypt:—Mrs. Corbett Ashby has just returned from the All-India Women's Congress at Karachi. On her way home she visited Iraq, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Turkey and Bulgaria to discuss arrangements with committees for the Women's International Congress at Istambul in April. She tells an interesting and amusing story of an experience she had in Egypt. According to the "News Chronicle", while in Cairo, Mrs. Corbett Ashby and three other members of the committee gave a luncheon to which, in addition to a number of Egyptian ladies, many prominent Egyptian men, including ministers and ex-ministers, were invited. Many of the ladies had never attended a mixed gathering before, and some had never seen the

inside of a hotel. One of the speakers was a charming Egyptian girl, about 20 years of age. When she rose "the men", relates Mrs. Corbet Ashby, "leaned back with indulgent smiles." But their faces changed when she went on to make a scathing indictment of the water supply in Egypt! "How", she asked, "can women be good mothers and good house-wives when their water supply is inadequate and unclean? Why doesn't the Public Health Dept. do something about it?" The Under-Secretary of Public Health, who was present, gave his promise to look into the matter.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby states the April Congress at Istambul will consist of about 200 delegates from 40 different countries. There will be no German delegates, but only visitors, as the German branch of the Alliance went into voluntary dissolution rather than accept a leader imposed upon them by the German Government. The main topic down for discussion is women's attitude to new forms of government.

The Trade in Armaments.—A special committee of the Disarmament Conference has begun at Geneva a consideration of the American proposals for the control of armaments. It was the extraordinary disclosures made during the United states inquiry into the arms traffic which led to that Government submitting their plan to the Disarmament Conference. Briefly, the United States scheme is that nations shall recognise that the manufacture of and trade in arms are " matters of interest to public international order, " and that the countries concerned shall undertake to assume complete responsibility for them inside their own terretories, including supervision of manufacture and the sale abroad of armaments. Under the proposals, all manufacturers of war materials would possess licences issued by their own Governments, and these licences would be subject to withdrawal if the regulations are not obeyed. Information as to any trade in arms would be forwarded by Governments to a permanent Disarmament Commission at Geneva, which it is the intention of the Conference to establish. It is hoped that these proposals will be adopted in the interests of world peace. It is infamous that there should be private traffic in armaments without regard to any national interest, merely for the sake of profits for armaments firms.

CHILD GUIDANCE AND MENTAL HEALTH

By Basil Howell.

In a recent talk on the wireless, a well-known psychologist said: "The problems of civilisation are essentially the problems of childhood." This fact is becoming widely acknowledged. The child of today is the man or woman of the civilization of tomorrow, and, too often, at the root of our social and other problems in this modern world, we find that a twisted childhood is bearing its evil fruit. In this connection, it is well worth studying the work of the Child Guidance Council (Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, London, W. C. 1), of which the President is Lord Blanesburgh.

The Child Guidance Council has been in existence five years, and, as in so many other cases, its work has been made possible by the generosity of the Commonwealth Fund of America, who have supplied the funds. It has an influential Executive Committee of which Mrs. Montagu Norman is Chairman, and also a Medical as well as a Psychological and Educational Sub-Committee. It was established "to encourage the provision of skilled treatment for children showing behaviour disturbances and early symptoms of nervous disorder." In their last Annual Report, the Council point out that the work of child guidance is arduous and difficult, and demands a high standard of professional education and efficiency. The methods employed follow the general principle of being simple and straight forward. Where a parent or teacher is in doubt on some question of managing a child, or where there is some unsuspected physical cause, the proper treatment is advised. In more difficult cases, where the relations between the child and his family have become unhappy, or the child is becoming neurotic, an effort is made to unravel the complications of the home life, and the child's neurosis is treated. In such cases the co-operation of the parents is always sought, and the child is encouraged to discuss his difficulties freely with the clinic physician and the nervous tension is thus released.

In addition to its works of encouraging the formation of Child Guidance Clinics, the Council arranges lectures by active members of the Clinic staffs, and women's organisations have been foremost in asking for lecturers. It is being realised that goodwill and sympathy are not always

enough; there must also be knowledge of the child's psychology, and a proper understanding of the methods of adjustment to its environment at home and school.

One of the best-known Clinics working under the auspices of the Council is the London Child Guidance Clinic (1 Canonbury Place, N. 1). During the past four and a half years, this Clinic has dealt with nearly nineteen hundred cases. It was designed to treat children and also to train students. Each case for treatment is dealt with from the first by one of the Psychiatrists, who is there-after responsible for it, thus making for continuity of treatment. Each Psychiatrist works in association with one psychologist and two social workers, each group forming a team or unit. Children are often sent to the Clinic by magistrates and probation officers attached to the Courts for examination and treatment. Among the problems for which cases were referred to the Clinic are: General backwardness, stealing, nervousness, temper, speech difficulties, lying, sex difficulties, night terrors and fears, screaming, depression, fits, hysteria, and lack of concentration. In all these cases it is of deep interest to find that play therapy occupies a prominent place in treatment. When a child shows obvious symptoms of mental distress, it is sometimes found that he will express his repressions and phantasies while playing with simple materials, such as blocks or plasticine, or when drawing. During play a child will often talk, since the use of the hands creates a freedom of thought and ideas.

There is no doubt about the extreme value of such work today. In a Paper read to the Annual Meeting of the Federation of Education Committees (Wales and Monmouthsire) by Dr. Ralph H. Crowley (Senior Medical Officer, Board of Education), he referred to the factors which have led us to take a great interest in the mental health of the child, such as changes in the purpose and aim of education, and the modern study of delinquency and crime and the recognition of their roots in the behaviour of childhood. We have to consider today, not this or that defect or disease, but the whole child—the body, and mind, the emotions, the environment at home and school, and the child's heredity. In the case of the dull or back-ward child, the hindering emotional factor may be found very often in the home with the resultant failure of proper mental adjustment. Even where a child is of ordinary or above ordinary intelligence, we may discover some emotional trouble which has led to undesirable behaviour.

Dr. Crowley pointed out that the benefit which many children receive at an open air school is due, not merely to the meals the child receives, or to the period of rest, but rather to the relief of strain in an atmosphere of what is to the child greater freedom. All this leads to the need for closer association between the home and the school, the teacher and parent. "There is the conflict," Dr. Crowley emphasises, "subconscious though it be, between the home life, the school life, the street life, and, it may be, the industrial life. Sound mental health requires an integrated life, and this at all costs we must secure."

The work of the Child Guidance Council and Clinic opens up new vistas of service to those who are interested in education in its wider aspects. It is not enough that we should demand that every child should be allowed to develop freely and fully all his latent powers of expression; we need to encourage the closest study of child psychology and to realise that the claims of the child transcend those of home or school and are related to the citizenship of the future. And, in the task of securing this wider education, women have an enormously important part to play.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

Do you come nearer, day by day,
    To the port where your drams all anchored lie,
Or do you sail farther and farther away
    In an angry sea with a sullen sky?
Do you come nearer the Ought-to-be
    In the waggon you hitched to a distant star?
Or do you drift on hopelessly,
    Content to bide with the Things-that-are?
Are you a Drone or a Do-it-now?
    A Hurry-up or a Wait-a-while?
A Do-it-so or an Anyhow?
    A cheer-up-boys or a Never-smile?
It's none of my business, that I know,
    For you are captain, and mate and crew
Of that ship of yours, but the Where-you-go
    Depends on the What-an-how you do.

NOTES & COMMENTS

The Polling Day :

The city had a holiday to go to the polls yesterday. To those women who had the advantage of serving either as polling officers or agents, specially for the first time, came strange and interesting experiences and many amusing ones too! There is quite separate arrangement for women voters to come and record their votes. The polling officers and agents are women and the men in the other half of the building, can be heard and seen, but are not supposed to step inside the women's room! It would take more than open doors or even closed ones to keep them out, but after all since they do little harm, and are efficiently dealt with by the women in authority no one is the worse! From 6-30 a. m. we sat in a stuffy school-room without any fan, and very little breeze to cool our heated brows, watching the women come in one by one; and what women they were! Seeing them and hearing them one felt that if this could happen to the last two generations by the giving of the franchise, there was great hope indeed for the younger women who will hold the wider franchise in years to come.

Of those who came nearly 80% were old women much over 50. Eventhough they did not know either how to fold their voting paper, or to write or read, or even just how they should put it into the ballot box, there was neither doubt nor hesitation as to whom they were going to vote for. They knew that quite clearly and by the remarks they made one could gather that they did understand the connection between their vote and what the candidate could do for them. One old woman laughed and said "For the last so many years I'm voting for — but the taxes are going on increasing." She knew what she wanted from the candidate though she did not know how to write her own vote. Now if these old women whose horizen is bounded by the narrow walls of their homes or her street, have come to realise so much in this short time; may we not hope that a great power will be released in the land when educated enlightened and consecrated women will excercise this weapon for the glory and freedom of their country. How faithfully they come to record their votes. One old woman, came panting with asthma, another was deaf and yet another with fever! Nothing kept them away and this was only a bye-election!

One other feature that was very prominent was that with the exception of the very few, all voted for the Congress candidate and this time she is a woman! Once they entered the doors of the polling room no hint of encouragement nor coersion was there to prompt them but one by one, old and young, the jewelled wealthy woman and the poor worker came in and clearly replied that she wanted to vote for the Congress Candidate.

She even went on to make sure that the mark was put against the right place. So from this, though we refrain from drawing inferences, we can see that the women know and understand simply and without much argument, just where their heart lies and they are not wrong either.

Mrs. Rukmini Lakshmipathi:

We offer to our old friend, member and co-worker in the great women's cause, Mrs. Rukmini Lakshmipathi our heartiest congratulations and good wishes on her successful election to the Madras Legislative Council. We are sure that she will be a great asset to the women as an elected member of the Legislature. She is the first elected woman member in Madras. Within the great wheel there is the little cog and if the cog does not fit and work smoothly the great wheel must stand idle and useless and so within the great cause of a nation's freedom is the smaller but more vital cause, of the realisation of the full stature of its womanhood; which if not attained will hinder and even hold up the greater work. So, even if Mrs. Lakshmipathi is a Congress candidate, she has always been a soldier for the women's cause and it is thus that we welcome her entry into the Council. We can't deny that it takes courage, self-sacrifice and loyalty to take the utmost penalty of one's convictions and this Mrs. Lakshmipathi has always done. The same qualities which Mrs. Lakshmipathi showed in the past are now available in a different sphere and a happier one. We may safely trust that they will operate as effectively in her new work and responsibility.

Women's Status and League of Nations:

We would draw the attention of our readers to the article published in this issue of Stri Dharma under the above title. This is an age of speed but what is 270 miles per hour compared to the strides that events are taking in the rearrangement of social conditions. Twenty-five years ago a few women sowed the seeds and watered them with their tears and now the harvest is richer beyond all dreaming and where few sowed many are reaping and the sower and the reaper both rejoice. The League of Nations, through the influence of the Women's Consultative Committee has agreed to discuss the entire "Status of Women" at their coming session in the light of the Montevideo Equality treaty signed last year by the American Republic.

Now is the time for women all over the world to create and work for the "united front of the women of the world", of which the article speaks. If only the nations and governments of the world could create such a front! There are many fronts and frontiers, guarded by guns and armies where fear and distrust are the ruling deities. But for the women of the whole world there is just one united front and that is where injustice would defeat

justice and the human rights of one half of humanity would be despoiled by the other half. There never was so stupendous a power for good in the world as the power of the "United World's Womenhood!" And now to come to the practical side of it, for there must be a practical side to everything, we would ask the women all over India to immediately create a central body which could receive and deal with and prepare a concise report from the Indian women to be presented at Geneva and discussed by the League Council, when this matter is considered next September.

America and its Opium Traffic:

There is a most humane and interesting experiment started in America which will enable thousands of miserable wrecked lives to regain their health and happiness. It is well-known that the Drug habit in America has been very wide spread and some say that this is because of prohibition. This seems like substituting one kind of poison for another. However by the humane methods that modern science has inculcated they have realised that drug victims need treatment and cure and not punishment and imprisonment. Two huge estates of 1,200 and 1500 acres are to be utilized, fitted up as opium farms and a staff of eminent scientists and doctors have been appointed to try to find new methods by which the poor drug victims can be treated back to health and sanity. It is well known that this unfortunate and terrible vice is one of the curses of India and we hope that soon the example of America will be followed in this country and they too will try to reclaim these poor souls from their tormenting obsession.

The Istanbul Congress:

Mrs. Hamid Ali, Iqubalunissa Begum, Begum Kamaluddin, will be attending the International Congress of Women at Istanbul on 17th April as the delegates of the Women's Indian Association and the following message has been sent to the President elect from the Women's Indian Association:

"Dear Friends and Fellow Workers,

> We send you our warmest good wishes, through our delegates, for the success of the Istanbul Congress, as well as for the continuous and rapid progress of the great cause, for the regeneration of humanity, through the selfless service of its emancipated womanhood, to which we are all pledged, no matter to what race or nation we belong. May the power of the Women's ideals all over the world regenerate and cleanse society and recreate the world! We, the members of the Women's Indian Association who are trying to do our share in this great country of ours send you our loving greetings and good wishes

for the success of work of the your great organisation and of the Congress."

New Hon. Woman Magistrates:

Mrs. Maude Hume Stanford, who is once again in Madras after an absence of 4 years has been re-appointed as an Hon. Presidency Magistrate. She was the founder and the first Hon. Secretary of the Children's Aid Society. She organised the Vigilance Association, and the Juvenile Court. She has always been a member of the W. I. A. and has now returned to India to work for the W. I. A. in connection with the Immoral Traffic Act. We congratulate her on her appointment.

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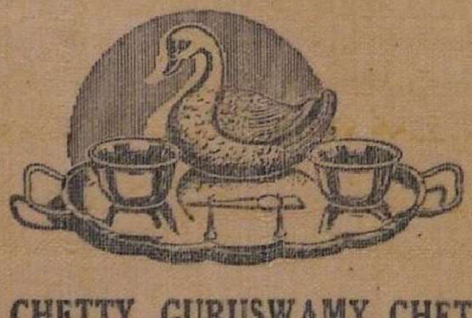

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வித்வான் T. M. தாணு அம்மாள் அவர்கள் தலைமை உரை
(தொடர்ச்சி)

மூன்றாவது இடையூறாகக் கூறவேண்டியது யாதெனின் நமது சகோதரர்கள் அனுஷ்டான மூலமாயும் மறைவாயும் பகிரங்கமாயும் செய்து வரும் எதிர்ப்பிரசாரமாகும். நம் சகோதரிகளிற் பலரும் இவ்வெதிர்ப்பிரசாரத்தில் அகப்பட்டுத் தத்தளித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள்.

இம் மூவகை இடையூறுகளும் தமிழ்மக்களது வாழ்க்கைச் சரிதத்தில் எல்லாக் காலத்தும் ஒரு நிலையாகவே நின்று சமுதாய முன்னேற்றத்தைத் தடைசெய்து வந்ததாகக் கூறமுடியாது. நமது சமயக் கொள்கைகளிலும் கடவுளர்கள் சரிதங்களிலும் பெண்மை மிக்க கௌரவமுடையதாகவே கருதப்பட்டு வந்திருக்கிறது.

பண்டைகாலத்தில் நம் நாட்டுப் பெண்மணிகளின் சரிதங்களை நோக்கினும் அக்காலத்தே பெண்மை கௌரவிக்கப் பட்டதென்பது விளங்கும். முற்காலத்திலே நம்மவர்கள் பல துறைகளிலும் மேன்மையுற்றிருந்தார்களென்பது புராதன நூற்களில் பல இடங்களிலும் கூறப்படுகின்றது. இடைக்காலத்திலும் அவ்வாறே பெண்மக்கள் புகழுடன் விளங்கியுள்ளார்கள். மணிமேகலைதிலகவதியார், முதலான துறவிகளும், கண்ணகி முதலிய கற்பரசிகளுமிருந்து பெருமையடைந்தது நமது நாட்டிலே தான். மங்கையர்க்கரசி வரலாற்றால் பெண்கள் எவ்வளவு உரிமையுடையவர்களாக இருந்தார்களென்று அறியலாம். அரசன் அமண்மதத்தில் ஈடுபட்டிருந்ததும் அரசியார் தம் கொள்கையை மாற்றாது சைவ நெறியிலேயே நின்று அந்நெறிதழைப்பதற்குப் பெரிதும் முயன்று இறுதியில் வெற்றியடைந்தனர். அரசனும் அரசியைத்தன் வழி நடக்கச் சிறிதும் வற்புறுத்தியதாகவும் நாம் கேள்விப்படவில்லை. இதற்கு மாறாக அவரவர் கொள்கையின்படி நடப்பதே உத்தமம் என்று அரசியாருக்கு அரசன் சுய அதிகாரமும் அளித்திருந்தானென்று கருத இடமுள்ளதாகின்றது.

சங்க காலத்திலே பெண் புலவர்கள் பல விளங்கினார்களென அறிகின்றோம். இவர்களது சரிதங்களை யெல்லாந்தொகுத்து நல்லிசைப் புலமை மெல்லியலார்கள் என்ற நூல் வெளிவந்துள்ளமை பலரும் அறிவர். ஔவை பாரி மகளிர் முதலானோரது சரிதங்களைப் படிக்குந் தோறும் எல்லையில்லாத பெருமகிழ்ச்சியடைகின்றோம். வள்ளுவர் காலத்தில் ஆண்மக்களைப்போலவே பெண்மக்களும் படித்து வந்தார்களென்பது அவரது நூலால் அறியலாம்.

“விலங்கொடுமக்களனையரிலங்கு நூல் கற்றாரோடேனையவர்”

என்ற குறளைக் கவனிக்க. இங்கே ஆசிரியர் வள்ளுவனார் ஆண் மக்களும்

பெண் மக்களும் உள்பட 'மக்கள்' என்று பொதுவாகவே கூறினர். அன்றியும் மெல்லியர் (weaker sex) என்றும் அபலைகள் என்றும் ஒதுக்கப் படுகின்ற நம் இனத்தவர் முற்காலத்தே வீரத்தாயாகவும் விளங்கி இருந்தனர்.

இங்ஙனமாக வாழ்க்கை நலத்திலும் கல்விப்பெருமையிலும் வீரச்சிறப்பிலும் நாம் கௌரவம் பெற்றிருந்தோம். இக்காலத்திலோ நம் பெண்மணிகள் உரிமை யற்று அடிமை வாழ்வு வாழ்ந்து அலங்கோலமடைகின்றனர், அவர்களுக்குப் போதுமான கல்வி அறிவு கிடையாது. ஆண்மக்களை 21 வயது வரையிலும் கல்வி கற்பிக்கப் படுகிறார்கள். பெண்களுக்கோ என்றால் 12 அல்லது 13 வயதடைந்த வுடனேயே அவளைப் பல இடையூறுகளுள்ள பாரமிகுந்த ஒரு குடும்ப வாழ்க்கையில் தள்ளிவிடுகின்றனர். அவர் அறிவும் கல்வியும் அந்த வயதோடு குன்றி விட்டதானால் அவள் வாழ்வு என்னாகும்? எங்ஙனம் இல்லறத்தைச் செவ்வையாக நடத்த வல்லவளாவாள்? எங்ஙனம் கணவனோடு ஒத்த சகதர்மணியாயிருத்தல் கூடும்? அறிவுப் பெருக்கத்திற்குரிய கல்வியைப் பெண் அடையாதொழிந்தால் அவள் கதி என்னவாகும். "தொட்டில் ஆட்டும்கை உலகை ஆட்டும்கை" என்பது உண்மை அல்லவா? இவள் மடமையில் ஆழ்ந்திருந்தால் அவள் வயிற்றுதிக்கும் குழந்தைகள் தான் மேன்மையடைய முடியுமா? பயிரின் நலன் நிலத்தின் தன்மையைப் பொறுத்ததன்றோ? இன்று பெண்களின் மடியில் தவழ்ந்து விளையாடும் பால் மணமாறாப் பாலர்கள் நாளை வீரர்களாகவும் சூரர்களாகவும் தேசத்தலைவர்களாகவும் ஆகிறார்களென்பதை யாரால் மறுக்க முடியும்? இவ்வாறு ஆகவேண்டியவர்களுக்கு இளமையிலே நற்பழக்கமும் நற்போதனையும் மிகவும் அவசியமல்லவா? தாயார் அறிவாற்றல் உடையவளாயிருந்தாலன்றி அவர் மக்கள் நல்லோர்களும் பெரியோர்களும் ஆதல் எப்படி?

எத்தனை உயர்ந்த லட்சியங்களைப் பெண் கைக்கொண்டிருக்கிறாள். அவள் தனக்கென வாழாது பிறர்க்கென வாழும் தன்மையுடையவள். தாய்மை பூண்டுத் தன் குழந்தையிடம் எவ்வளவோ அன்புடனும் பெருமையுடனும் நடக்கிறாள்.

அதோடு நில்லாது தன் கணவன் மாமன், மாமி இவர்களுக்கு அடக்க ஒடுக்கமாக வேண்டும் தொண்டாற்ற வல்லவளாயிருக்கிறாள். எப்போதும் அவள் முகத்தில் அன்பு நடனம் புரிகிறது. கருணை குடியிருக்கு மிடம் பெண் இருதயமே. பெண்மை என்றால் பொருள் யாது? அது அடக்கம், பொறுமை, கருணை, அழகு இவை யெல்லாம் ஒருங்கே நிறைந்ததொன்றாம். ஆண் ஒரு பாதியானால் பெண் ஒரு பாதியாக விளங்கும் இந் நாட்டில் ஒரு பாதியான பெண் குருதி யோட்டம் குன்றிக் குறுகினால் இந்நாட்டின் நிலை என்னாகும்? பெண்ணுலகின் உரிமை, வயம், அறிவு, வீரம், வைகள் முன்னேறினாலன்றி நம் நாட்டுக்கு உயர்வு வாராதென்பது திண்ணம்.

ஆகவே நமது சமுதாயம் முன்னேற்ற மடைய வேண்டுமாயின், நமது நாடு பிறநாடுகளை யொப்ப பெருமையுற வேண்டுமாயின் நம்மவர்களுக்கு இகவாழ்வில் இன்பம் பெருக வேண்டுமாயின் நமது சகோதரிகளது உரிமைத் தக்கவாறு பேணப்படுவது அத்தியாவசியமாகும். அவர்களுக்குக் கல்வி நன்றாகக் கற்பிக்கப் பெறுதல் வேண்டும்.

அவர்களை கௌரவமாக நடத்துதல் வேண்டும், அவர்கள் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு இடையூறாயின வெல்லாம் ஒழிதல் வேண்டும்.

நமக்கு மட்டுமன்று, ஆண் பெண் இருபாலர்க்கும் இப்போதுள்ள கல்விமுறை மிகவும் பொருத்த மற்றதாகவே யுள்ளது. பிற நாட்டினர் அவரவர் தாய் மொழியில் கல்வி பயிலுகிறார்கள். நமது துர்அதிர்ஷ்டவசத்தால் பிறபாஷைகளுக்குங் கூட நாம் அடிமையாயிருக்கிறோம். நமது தாய் மொழியில் நாம் கல்வி பயிலுவதில்லை.

தாய் மொழி மூலமாகக் கல்வி கற்பிக்கப் படவேண்டுமென்ற உணர்ச்சியானது இப்பொழுது தான் நம் மிடையே பரவி வருகிறது. பெண்களுக்கு உயர்தரக் கல்வி வேண்டுமா என்ற ஒரு கேள்வியை நாம் எடுத்துக் கொள்ளுவோம். இதற்குரிய நியாயங்களைப் பலபட அறியவேண்டுவதில்லை.

ஒரு சிலரே உயர்தரக் கல்வியை (Collegiate Education) மேற்கொள்ளுதற்கு தகுதி வாய்ந்தவராவர். அவர்கள் தங்கள் தகுதிக் கேற்ப உயர்தரக் கல்வியை நாடி உயர்தரக் கலாசாலைகளுக்குச் செல்லட்டும், நம்மிற் பெரும்பாலர்க்கு உயர்தரக் கல்வி இன்றியமையாத தன்றெனத்தான் கூறவேண்டும். பெண்களாகிய நமது வாழ்க்கைக்குத் தக்கபடி, கல்வி முறையின் அமைப்பு மாறுபடுதல் வேண்டும். தாய்ப் பாஷையை நன்றாய்க் கற்று அதற்கு மேல் தான் மற்றப் பாஷைகளைப் படிக்கவேண்டும். அன்றியும் இல்லற நிர்வாகத்துக்குரிய விஷயங்களனைத்தும் நமக்குச் செவ்வனே கற்பிக்கப் படுதல் வேண்டும். இம்முறையிலே நமது கல்வி அமையுமாயின், நம்மிற் பெரும்பாலர்க்குத் திருப்திகரமாயிருக்குமென்றெண்ணுகிறேன். இதற்கு வேண்டும் முயற்சிகளை நாமும் நமது சகோதரர்களும் செய்ய முற்படுதல் வேண்டும்.

இரண்டாவது விவாகத்தால் வந்த பலன்

முதல் மனைவியுடன் வாழாதவருக்கு ஸ்ரீதனம் சொந்தமல்ல

செங்கற்பட்டு வழக்கில் தீர்ப்பு

திருச்சி வக்கீல் ஸ்ரீ. ஏ. வி. கோபாலாச்சாரியார் குமாரி ஸ்ரீமதி ஜெயலக்ஷ்மியம்மாள் என்ற பிராமணப் பெண் தனது கணவன் ஸ்ரீ. டி. எம். நரசிம்மாச் சாரியார் மீதும் மாமனார் ஸ்ரீ. டி. எம். கோபாலச்சாரியார் மீதும் கொடுத்த வியாஜ்ஜியத்தில் செங்கற்பட்டு சப் ஜட்ஜ் ஸ்ரீ. ஆர். வேம்பு அய்யர், பிரதி வாதிகள் பூராத்தொகையுடன் சொத்துக்களை வாதிக்கு செலுத்தி விடவேண்டுமென்று தீர்ப்பளித்தார்.

பெண்ணின் மாமனாரான ஸ்ரீ. டி. எம். கோபாலாச்சாரியார் மூர்த்தி ஜில்லா முன்சீப்பாக இருந்தவர். பின்னர் சென்னை ஹைக்கோர்ட் அச்சுயந்திர இலாகா நிர்வாகஸ்தராக விருந்தார். தற்போது அவர் ரிட்டையராகி மாம்பலத்திலிருந்து வருகிறார்.

தான், மைனராக இருந்தால் தனக்காக தன் தந்தையால் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட ஸ்ரீதன சொத்துக்களை தனது மாமனார் பாதுகாத்து வந்தாரென்றும், மேற்படி சொத்துகள் தன்னுடைய தென்றும் தனது கணவன் வேறு மனைவியை மணந்து கொண்டதால் தனது ஸ்ரீதனமாகக் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட 11000 ரூபாய் பெறுமான சொத்துக்களை திருப்பிக் கொடுக்க வேண்டுமென்றும் ஸ்ரீமதி ஜெயலக்ஷ்மியம்மாள் மேற்படி மாமனார் கணவன், இவர்கள் மீது வழக்குத் தொடர்ந்தார்.

வாதி ஸ்ரீமதி ஜெயலக்ஷ்மி ஸ்ரீ. டி. எம். நரசிம்மாச்சாரியாரை 1924-வது வருஷம் ஜூன் மாதம் மணந்து கொண்டார் பின்னர் கணவனும் மனைவியும் ஒன்று சேர்ந்து வாழமுடியாது போயினமையாலும் டி. எம். நரசிம்மாச்சாரியார் 1923-வது வருடத்தில் இரண்டாவது தடவையாக ஓர் பெண்ணை மணம் புரிந்து கொண்டதாலுமே இந்த வியாஜ்யம் ஏற்பட யேதுவாயிருந்தது.

தீர்ப்பு

மேற்படி வழக்கில் அனேக தஸ்தாவேஜிகளும், கடிதங்களும் நீதிபதியால் பரிசீலனை செய்யப்பட்டன. பலர் சாட்சிகளாக விசாரிக்கப் பட்டன.

ஸ்ரீதனங்கள் யாவும் வாதிக்கே அளிக்கப்பட்டனவென்றும் அவர் வியாஜ்யத்திற்கு தக்க ஆதாரங்களிருக்கின்றன என்றும் நீதிபதி கூறினார். கனம் நீதிபதி அளித்த தீர்ப்பிலிருந்து கீழே சில முக்கியமான பகுதிகள் மட்டும் தரப்படுகின்றன.

ஸ்ரீதனம் என்பது என்ன?

தனது மகள் கல்யாணத்தின் போதும் ருது சாந்தியின்போதும், சாந்தி முகூர்த்தத்தின் போதும் இம்மாதிரி இன்னும் சில சமயங்களிலும் அவளது தகப்பன் அளிக்கும் பரிசுகளை குறித்து சட்டம் ஆதரிக்கிறது.

பெண்ணின் தகப்பனார் தனது மகளின் நன்மைக்காக வேண்டி மருமகனுக்கு சொத்துக்கள் கொடுத்தால் அந்த சொத்துக்களும் பெண்ணின் ஸ்ரீதனமே என்று

வியாசர் கூறுகிறார். தாயபாகத்தின் கருத்தும் கூட இதுதான்.

"தமிழ் அகராதிப்படி 'ஸ்ரீதனம்' என்ற வார்த்தைக்கு 'தனது மகள் கலியாணத்தின்போது அவர்களுக்கு பரிசுகள் அளிப்பது' என்று அர்த்தம். ஸ்ரீதனம் என்பது பெண்ணுக்கு மட்டுமே, ஆணுக்கு ஸ்ரீதனம் கொடுப்பதாக நாம் கேள்விப்பட்டதில்லை.

பெண்ணும், பையனும்

"இந்த வழக்கில் ஒன்றை ஞாபகப்படுத்திக் கொள்ள வேண்டும். பெண் நாளுக்காக வளர்ந்தவள். செல்வத்தில் ரமணீயமாக அவளது பெற்றோர்களால் வளர்க்கப்பட்டு வந்திருக்கிறாள். அவள் செல்வத்தில் பிறந்தாள். அவள் நாகரீகமடைந்தவள் சமஸ்கிருதத்திலும், ஆங்கிலத்திலும் அவளுக்கு உயரிய பயிற்சி யிருக்கிறது. ஆனால் மணமகனோ எஸ். எஸ். எல். ஸி. யில் தேறுவதே பிரமப் பிரயத்தனமாய்த் தோன்றியதால், அந்த முயற்சியையே விட்டு விட்டார். பெண் இந்த விதம் பையன் அந்த விதம்!"

மாமனார் வீட்டில்

"இந்த வழக்கில் பரிசிலனை செய்யப்பட்ட கடிதம் மாம்பலத்திலுள்ள தனது மாமனார் வீட்டுக்கு பெண் வந்ததும் அவளை அவளது காதாம் தெரியாமல் சமையக்காரி போல நடத்தி வந்திருக்கிறார்கள் என்று ருஜுப்படுத்துகின்றது. அவள் பலஹீனமான ஒரு பெண். ஆதலின் அன்பாக நடத்தப்பட வேண்டியவள்.

இரண்டாவது விவாகம்

"1928-ல் இரண்டாவது பிரதிவாதி (வாதியின் கணவர்) பெங்களூர் பெண் ஒன்றை திருவண்ணாமலையில் விவாகம் செய்து கொண்டார். உண்மையில் அப்போது இரண்டாவது விவாகத்திற்கு அவசியமேயில்லை. பையனுக்கு அப்போது வயது 22. வாதி தனது கணவனுடன் வாழாததால் இரண்டாவது கலியாணம் அவசியமாயிற்று என்று சொல்லப்படும் 'சால்ஜாப்பு' என் மனதுக்குப் பிடிக்கவில்லை. ஹிந்து சட்டம் இரண்டாவது விவாகத்திற்குக் கூறும் எந்த ஆதாரங்களும் இந்த வழக்கில் காணப்படவில்லை. ஏழைப் பெண் ஜெயத்தையும் அவளது தகப்பனாரையும் மனவேதனைக்குள்ளாக்கவே இந்த விவாகம் செய்யப்பட்டது.

கொடுத்து விடவேண்டும்

"ஆதலின் பிரதிவாதிகள் இந்த தேதியிலிருந்து 18 தினங்களுக்குள் சொத்துக்களை வாதியிடம் ஒப்படைத்து விடவேண்டும். ரூபாய் 11000 தாளக்கூடிய சொத்துக்களைத் தவறாக வைத்திருந்த தற்காகவோ அல்லது அத்தொகைக்கு வட்டியாகவோ பிரதிவாதிகள் 6 சதவிகிதம் வட்டியும் கொடுத்து விடவேண்டும். தவிரவும் வாதியின் வியாஜ்ஜியத்திற்கு பூராசெலவு தொகையும் கொடுத்து விடவேண்டும்.

இந்த வழக்கு

தென்னிந்தியாவில், ஸ்ரீதன வழக்கில் வெற்றி பெற்ற வழக்கு இதுவே முதலாவது என்று சொல்லப் படுகிறது. சப்ஜட்ஜியின் அபிப்பிராயம் மிகவும் முக்கியமானதும் பாராட்டுவதற்கு உரியதுமாகும்.

வாதிக்கு ராவ்சாகேப்-பி. சின்னசாமி அய்யங்காரும், அவருக்கு உதவியாக ஸ்ரீ. வி. இ. கிருஷ்ணமாச்சாரியும் பிரதிவாதிகளுக்கு சென்னை வக்கீல் C. R. பத்மநாப அய்யங்காரும் அவருக்கு உதவியாகிய எம். ஆர். நரசிம்ம சர்மாவும் ஆஜரானார்கள்.

ஸ்ரீதனம் யாருக்குச் சொந்தம்

எடுத்ததற்கெல்லாம் "இரண்டாவது விவாகம்" செய்து விடுவதாக பயமுறுத்துவது சில மாப்பிள்ளை வீட்டுக்காரர்களுக்கு வழக்கம். அம்மாதிரி புலிகளுக்கு செங்கற்பட்டு வழக்கு ஒரு பெரிய அதிர்ச்சியை உண்டுபண்ணுமென்பது நிச்சயம். அந்த வழக்கில் செஷன்ஸ்ஜட்ஜ் கூறிய தீர்ப்பை மேலே கூறியிருக்கிறோம். கணவன் மறு விவாகம் செய்து கொண்டதால் தனது ஸ்ரீதனப் பொருளை திரும்பக் கொடுத்து விடவேண்டுமென்பது மனைவியின் வழக்கு. விவாகத்தில் பரிசாக வழங்கியதால் அவற்றைத் திரும்பக் கேட்க உரிமை இல்லை என்பது பிரதிவாதிகள் கட்சி. ஆனால் மாப்பிள்ளை வீட்டாரிடம் ரூபா 11 ஆயிரம் பெறும்படியான பொருட்கள் ஸ்ரீதனமாகவே கொடுக்கப்பட்டதென்றால், ஸ்ரீதனமென்றால் பெண்ணுக்குக் கொடுக்கும் பரிசுக்கே பெயரென்றும் புருஷனுக்கு கொடுப்பதற்கு ஸ்ரீதனமென்ற பெயரில்லையென்றும் கூறி, வாதி கேட்கும் பொருட்களையோ இல்லாவிடின் அவற்றிற்குள்ள பணத்தையோ செலவு தொகையுடன் கொடுக்கும்படி தீர்ப்புக் கூறியிருக்கிறார்கள். ஆகவே புருஷன் மறு விவாகம் செய்வதாக பூச்சாண்டி காட்டினால், இம்மாதிரி ஸ்ரீதனப் பொருளை இழக்க வேண்டியிருக்கும் என்பதை ஞாபகத்தில் வைத்துக் கொள்ளவேண்டும். முதல் மனைவியை நிராகரித்து இரண்டாவது மனைவியை நாடும் ஒருவன் முதல் மனைவியின் ஸ்ரீதனப் பொருளில் மட்டும் உரிமை காட்டுவது முழு அயோக்கியத்தனமாகும். பணத்தைப் பொறுத்த வரையில் செங்கற்பட்டு வழக்குத் தீர்ப்பு முக்கியமானதாயிருந்தாலும் இவ்விஷயத்தில் இன்னம் கவனிக்கவேண்டிய பல விஷயங்கள் இருக்கின்றன. பெண் இரண்டாம் முறை கல்யாணம் செய்து கொள்ளுவதில்லையென்ற வழக்கம் பொதுவாய் இந்துக்களுக்குள் இருப்பதால், அந்த பலவீனத்தை தங்களுக்கு அநுகூலமாக உபயோகிக்க முயற்சி செய்வது மாப்பிள்ளை வீட்டுக்காரர் வழக்கமாயிருக்கிறது. இதனால் அனாவசியமாக பெண் வீட்டுக்காரரை இம்சிப்பதும், தூஷிப்பதும் கேவலமாய் நடத்துவதும், பையனுக்கு மறுவிவாகம் செய்யப்போவதாகப் பயமுறுத்துவதும் சகஜமாயிருக்கிறது

படித்து உத்தியோகம் பார்க்கும் பேர்வழிகளே இம்மாதிரி காரியங்களில் இறங்குவார்களானால் இவற்றைத் தடுக்க தகுதியான நடவடிக்கைகள் எடுக்க வேண்டியது மிகவும் அவசியமாகும். புருஷன் மறு விவாகம் செய்வது இந்த சீரழிந்த இந்து சமூகத்தில் குற்றமாகக் கருதப்படுவதில்லை. ஆனால் பெண் மறு விவாகம் செய்வதென்றால், அந்த நினைப்பே அநேக கோடி பாவம் என்று கூறுகிறார்கள். புருஷர்கள் மறு விவாகம் செய்துக் கொள்ளுகிறான். ஸ்ரீதனப்பணத்தையும் ஒழுங்காய் திரும்பக் கொடுக்கா விட்டால் போட்டு வாங்கிவிடலாம். ஆனால் மனைவியின் கதியென்ன? மறு விவாகம் என்ற பேச்சல்லாத வரையில் அவளது இல்லற வாழ்க்கை அதோகதியாய்ப் போய் விடவில்லையா? இதற்கு பரிகாரம் வேண்டுமா? பணக்காரர் வீட்டுப் பெண்களுக்

காவது ஸ்ரீதனத்தை திரும்பவாங்கி காலட்சேபம் செய்ய முடியும் எளிய பெண்களின் கதியென்ன? இவற்றையெல்லாம் யோசித்தால் ஒரு மனைவிக்கு மேல் விவாகம் செய்யக்கூடாது என்ற சட்டம் ஏற்படுத்த வேண்டியது மிகவும் அவசியம், என்பது தெரியும். அதோடு மற்றொரு விஷயமும் இந்த சமூகத்திற்கு மிகவும் முக்கியமானது. செங்கற்பட்டு வழக்கில் புருஷனை விட மனைவி அதிகக் கல்வியறிவுள்ளவர் என்று ஜட்ஜு கூறுகிறார். இம்மாதிரி வித்தியாசம் இருப்பது இயற்கை. ஆனால் சில அறிவற்ற புருஷர்கள் தங்களை விட தங்கள் மனைவியார் புத்திசாலிகளாக இருப்பதைக் கண்டு கோபங்கொள்ளுகிறார்கள். இவற்றிற்கெல்லாம் அடிப்படையானது பெண் மறுவிவாகம் செய்து கொள்ள முடியாதவள், திக்கற்றவள் என்ற அபிப்பிராயமே யாகும். ஆகவே இந்த அகம்பாவத்தை நீக்கவும், பெண்கள் அவசியம் நேர்ந்தால் சுயேச்சையாக யார் உதவியும் எதிர்பாராமல் வாழவும் வேண்டுமானால் விவாகத்திற்கு முன்பே அவர்களுக்கு நல்ல கல்வி கொடுத்து, ஏதாவது ஒரு தொழிலில் பயிற்சியும் கொடுப்பது அவசியமாகும் அந்த முறையில் அவர்கள் சுயேச்சையாக வாழமுடியும் என்ற நினைப்பு மத்திய வகுப்பைச் சேர்ந்த புருஷர்களுக்கு வருமானால், இப்பொழுது பெண்கள் படும் பல கஷ்டங்கள் இருந்த இடந்தெரியாமல் மறைந்து போகும். (தினமணி)

கற்பகம்

T. M. சரோஜம்

(தொடர்ச்சி)

"மெய் வருத்தம் பாரார்; பசி நோக்கார்; கண்துஞ்சார்
எவ்வெவர் தீமையும் மேற்கொள்ளார்; செவ்வி அருமையும் பாரார்;
தம் கருமமே கண்ணாயினார்"

என்ற ஆன்றோர் அருள் மொழிக்குச் சரியாக கற்பகம் படிப்பில் நாளுக்கு நாள் தேர்ச்சியுற்றாள், வருடமும் மூன்று கடந்து விட்டது. கற்பகமும் ஆங்கிலத்தில் 3-வது வகுப்பில் படித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறாள். வயதும் பதினைந்தாகிறது. இனிமேல் படிப்பது சரியல்லவென்று பங்கஜமும் அவள் கணவனும் சொல்வது வழக்கம். கற்பகம் தான் யாதொரு தப்பும் வாராமல் நடக்கிறேனென்று கெஞ்சிக்கேட்டுக் கொண்டதின் பேரில் பாடசாலைக்கு இன்னும் போய்க்கொண்டிருந்தாள். காலையில் 8மணிக்குத் தன் தோழிப் பெண்களோடு போவாள் இரண்டாம் வேளை ஆகாரத்தை யெல்லாப் பெண்களும் கையில் எடுத்துச் செல்வது வழக்கம். அம்மாதிரியே நம் கற்பகமும் போவாள். பாடசாலையில் இவர்களுக்குத் தனியாக ஒரு அறையுண்டு. அதில் எல்லோரும் சென்று ஆகாரம் சாப்பிடுவார்கள். இப்படியிருக்கும்போது சுமார் 19 வயதான ஓர் வாலிபன் அடிக்கடி கற்பகத்தின் எதிராக வருவது வழக்கம். அது அவளுக்கு பிடிக்கவில்லை. அவனைப்பார்த்தால் ஓர் பணக்கார வீட்டுப் பையனாகவும் கல்லூரில் படிக்கும் மாணவனாகவும் காணப்பட்டது. அவன் தோற்ற முதலியவைகளிலிருந்து தன்னைக் காதலிப்பதாகக் கற்பகம்

அறிந்து கொண்டாள். ஆனால் அவனைக் காதலிக்காமல் தன் மனத்தை தன்வசப் படுத்திக் கொண்டாள் வரவர அவ்வாலிபன் வார்த்தையாடத் தொடங்கினான். அது கற்பகத்திற்கு பிடிக்கவில்லை. அப்போது பள்ளிக்கூட விடுமுறையும் வந்தது.

விடுமுறை முடிந்ததும் கற்பகம் தானேதன் தமக்கையிடம் இதுவரையிலும் படித்தது போதுமென்றும் இனிமேல் வீட்டிலிருந்து படித்துக்கொள்ளுவதாகவுஞ் சொன்னாள். அவ்வாறே கற்பகத்தின் பாடசாலைப் போக்கும் படிப்பும் பூர்த்தியானது. என்றாலும், வீட்டிலிருந்து அறிவுவளரும் நல்ல கதைப்புத்தகங்களைப் படிப்பாள். வித விதமான தையல்களை அழகுபட தைப்பாள். தன் அக்காளுக்கும் கற்றுக்கொடுப்பாள். சுமாராகப் பாடவுஞ் செய்வாள்.

பங்கஜம் தன் தங்கைக்குத் தக்க வரன் தேடும்படியாக தன் கணவனிடம் அடிக் கடி சொல்லுவாள். அவனும் அவ்வாறே அவர்கள் நிலைமைக்குத் தக்க வரன்களைத் தேடிக்கொண்டிருந்தான்.

நிற்க, ஒருநாள் கற்பகம் பின்பக்கத்துத் தோட்டத்தில் கத்திரி, கீரை, கொத்த மல்லி முதலிய பயிர்களுக்குத் தண்ணீர் இறைத்துக் கொண்டிருந்தாள் அப்போது அவ் வழியாகப் போய்க்கொண்டிருந்த வாலிபன் (முன்னால் பாடசாலையில் சந்தித்தவன்) கற்பகத்தைக் கண்டான். கண்டதும் புன்சிரிப்புடன் அவள் பக்கத்தில் சென்று, அம்மா தங்கள் பெயர் என்ன? நீங்கள் பாடசாலைக்கு வராத காரணம் யாது? என்று வினவி னான். கற்பகம் தலை குனிந்த வண்ணமாக தன் பெயர் கற்பகம் என்று சொல்லியதும் சீக்கிரமாக வீட்டிற்குள் நுழைந்து விட்டாள், மனோகரன் (அந்த வாலிபன் பெயர்) கற்பகத்தின் ஞாபகமாகவே வீடு சேர்ந்தான்.

அன்று இரவு தூக்கம் பிடிக்கவில்லை. தன் தகப்பனாரிடம் சொல்வதற்குச் சிறிது பயங்கொண்டான். பலபல விதமான யோசனைகள் செய்தபடி இருந்தான்

(தொடரும்.)

స్త్రీధర్మ

అఖిలభారత మహిళా సమావేశము.

అఖిలభారత మహిళాసమావేశమున కగ్రాసనాధిపత్యము వహించిన శ్రీమతి రస్తుంజీ ఫరిదూంజీ సతీమణిగారి భాషణము:—

ఈ మండలియొక్క ప్రథమ సమావేశ మెనిమిది సంవత్సరములకు ముందు నాచే ప్రారంభింపబడినప్పుడిది యింతత్వరలో నింత మహోన్నతదశకు రాగలదని నేను దలంచలేదు. ఇప్పటిస్థితికి దీనిని దెచ్చినట్టి నా సోదరీమణులకు నేను కృతజ్ఞత గలిగియున్నాను. ఈమండలి ఇట్టిదశ నొందినందున కెంతయు సంతసిల్లెదను.

ఇప్పుడు భారతీయ మహిళామణుల స్థితిగతులు పూర్వముకన్న నెక్కుడుగ వృద్ధినొంది యున్నవి. స్త్రీల యభివృద్ధికై పాటుబడువారిలో నేనొక్కర్తగ నుండినందున కాలకాలముగ మనలో నావరించియుండిన యజ్ఞానమను నిద్రను తొలంగి యుత్సాహోద్యోగము కలుగుచున్నదని తెలియుచున్నది. అనేక శతాబ్దములుగ మాటుపడియుండిన మనశక్తుల నిప్పు డుపయోగించుట కవకాశ మేర్పడినది. మన సోదరీమణులు, తమ దేశమునకు సేవచేయుట ఒక విధ్యుక్తధర్మమని తెలిసికొని తమ భర్తలతోను, తండ్రులతోను, సోదరులతోను గలసి తమ పరిస్థితుల వృద్ధినొందించుకొన సమముగా పాటుపడుచున్నారు. ఇట్టిస్థితి మనకు గలిగినందులకు మనము సంతసించవలెను. స్త్రీలు తమ జీవితములను సతి శ్రద్ధవహించునట్లు చేయగలిగితిమి. వారు కృషీవలులకన్న పశుపక్ష్యాదులకన్న నెక్కుడగు మానవత్వమునందని గ్రహింపగలిగిరి. మానవత్వ సౌఖ్యములకు తాము తమ శక్తులయాలమున సేవచేయగలరని తెలియజాలిరి.

స్త్రీలు విద్యావిషయకముగ నాకెంత యధమస్థితియందుండునది మీ రెరుంగగలిగియే యున్నారు. కావున దానిని చర్వితచర్వణముగా జెప్పనక్కఱలేదు. అయినను మన పూర్వసమావేశములగూర్చి కొంత చర్చించు టనవసరముగాదు. పూనాలో మొట్టమొదట జరిగిన మన ప్రథమసమావేశమునకన్న నెక్కుడుగను దానితో సమానముగను సేవ, ఐకమత్యము మొదలగువానిలో నున్నామని జెప్పజాలను. అప్పటి యుత్సాహముతోను శ్రద్ధతోను మన సోదరీమణులు ఎడతెగక పరిశ్రమజేసిరేని భరతఖండముయొక్క భావిపరిస్థితి పరిష్కరింపబడినదని తలచి యెక్కువ సంతసిల్లితిని. మానవసేవకొఱకట్టి మహోన్నతశక్తు లుద్యుక్తములై యున్నవని యిప్పటికిని పురుషు లనేకు లెఱుంగజాలకున్నారు. ద్వితీయ సమావేశ
నుండిన సామర్థ్యశాలినియు, విజ్ఞానఖనియు, ధైర్య సాహసోపేతయు, శ్రీ

పరిశ్రమచేసి యున్నవిఖ్యాతురాలగు శ్రీ శ్రీ బరోడా మహారాణియు, మితవాదినియు, కార్యనిపుణయునగు, కే॥ శే॥ భూపాల్ నవాబు మాతయు నాధ్యక్షతను వహించుచున్నారు. ఈద్వితీయ సమావేశమునందే శారదా చట్టము, విద్యానిధియు స్థాపింప ప్రయత్నములు సలుపబడి కార్యరూపమునకు గడంగబడినవి. తర్వాత ఇండియాలో స్త్రీలవిషయమై అన్నిటికన్న నధమస్థితియం దుండునట్లు పరిగణింపబడుచుండిన బీహారున తృతీయసమావేశము జరిగినది. అప్పుడు భర్తకును పాట్నాప్రజలకును వ్యతిరిక్తముగ ధైర్యముతో నాహ్వాన సంఘాధ్యక్షతవహించి నిలబడిన యువతీమణి మనకందఱకు మార్గదర్శకురాలయ్యెను. అప్పుడే సంఘసంస్కరణ యొక్క యత్యావశ్యకతను దెలిసికొనగలిగితిమి. విద్యావిధానముతోబాటు సంఘసంస్కరణయు జేయగడంగి తిమి. నాలుగవది బొంబాయిలో జరిగినది. అప్పుడు స్త్రీలు తమ మహాకార్యమున మగ్నలై సాంఘికవిద్యా విషయక కార్యముల పూనికతో జేయుటను గాంచితిమి. దక్షిణరాష్ట్రములనుండి వచ్చినవారిదృక్పథములను బొంబాయిలో జరుగు నిట్టి వివిధశాఖ లానందకరములయ్యెను. వనితామతల్లియగు శ్రీమతి సరోజినిదేవిగారి యధ్యక్షత్వముక్రింద లేడి దొరబ్‌టాటాగారి యాజమాన్యమున జరుపబడిన యీసమావేశము మరు వదగినది గాదు. లాహోరులో జరిగిన యైదవసమావేశము పరదాలోని స్త్రీలచే బహుసమ్మతితో జరుపబడి స్త్రీలకార్యనిర్వహణ దీక్షను మరెంత దృఢపరచుచున్నది. సంపూర్ణఘోషాలగు స్త్రీలు వేనవేలు సమావేశ మున మిళితులై యాంగ్లమున భాషింపబడు ప్రతిమాటయు నుర్దూభాషను దమకు తర్జుమా జేయించునట్లుజేసి పట్టుదలతో విని సంతసించిరి. మదరాసునగర నివాసినియగు నొక ముసల్మానువనితామణి యీ సమావేశమున నాహ్వాన సంఘాధ్యక్షురాలై కొరానుబోధలననుసరించి తాను పరదాను తీసివేసితినని ధైర్యముతో జెప్ప గలిగిన దెంతయానందకరము. పూర్వాచారపరాయణత్వమునకు పస్నెకెక్కిన యిట్టిదేశమున మేమందరు జాతి భేదములు మాని, గొప్పగొప్పస్త్రీలతో పంక్తిభోజనము గావించితిమి. తర్వాత ముసల్మాను బలప్రాబల్య మునకు పేరుగాంచిన లక్నోయందు ౬-వ సమావేశము జరిగెను. అప్పుడు రెండుతెగలవారునుగలిసి సామాన్య వ్యవహారికభాష హిందీగ తీర్మానించి యామోదించిరి. కడపటి గతసంవత్సరమున మహాగొప్పదియగు కలకత్తా సమావేశము జరిగెను. అప్పటి సంఖ్యాధికులగు స్త్రీప్రతినిధుల విశ్వసించిరి. సకలలోకదర్శనీయమును సుకరము మగ నొనగూర్చబడినది. బెంగాలుదేశమునుండి, స్త్రీలు రాజకీయములందే గాక తమశక్తులను, ఉత్తమ విద్యావిధానముల బడయుటకును వినియోగింపవలెనను ప్రశ్నవచ్చెను. ఈప్రశ్న బెంగాలు గవర్నమెంటు పబ్లిక్ ఇన్‌స్ట్రక్షన్ డైరెక్టరుయొద్దనుండి వచ్చినందున ఇండియాలోని సర్వప్రదేశములందును స్త్రీల ప్రోత్సాహములకుబలమొసంగి అఖిలఇండియాసమావేశమున గవర్నమెంటువారితో సలిపిన మైత్రి యుత్పత్తించు పట్టొడంబడి వారిని పొందుటకు శ్రీకరముగ భావించుచుంటిమి.

స్త్రీల స్థితి.

ఈలోకమున స్త్రీని జీవితము పురుషునితో సమానత్వము ముఖ్యముగా గావలయునని నాకు ప్రతి సంవత్సరము దోచుచుండెడిది. సమత్వమనగా స్త్రీ పురుషులకు సమానస్థానము, సమానశక్తులు కార్య చరణలందును జీవితమందును సమస్వతంత్రము వివాహానంతరము గృహస్థకార్యము చూడనవసరము గాని సమస్థానము గలుగుట. ఇట్టి సమానత్వము గలవారు వందలకొలది యున్నారు గాని కొన్నిపట్టణములకు చెప్పినట్లుగా 'పుర్కాల కన్న కొంత మేలుగను, తమపుత్రులకన్న కొంతప్రియకరులుగను' భావింపబడు స్త్రీలు లక్షలకొలదిగ నున్నారు.
[illegible] ...వి జీవమునదేమనగా, 'మీ స్త్రీలకు విద్యావతులజేసి వారికొసగల మీయాస్తి ప్రొయ
[illegible] ...లుగను వాటావస్తువులుగను పరిగణింపకుడు' అని. హాస్యోక్తియులు

స్త్రీలు మొట్టమొదట వారు స్వేచ్ఛనొసంగబడిన పదిసంవత్సరములు అలంకరణాది భోగవిషయములందు వినియోగపరచిరి గాని తర్వాత వారు స్వేచ్ఛయన నేమని చక్కగా గ్రహించి తమ బాధ్యతలను నెఱింగి యభివృద్ధికి రాగలిగిరి. అయితే దైవాధీనముగ మన హిందూదేశమునకు స్వేచ్ఛ క్రమక్రమముగా వచ్చుచున్నది గావున, నది రానురాను, మనము మన కార్యక్రమముల బాధ్యతల గ్రహించి నడచుకొన గలిగెదము.

బాలికావిద్య సకలదిశలయందును నతి తీవ్రగతిని నభివృద్ధి నొందుచున్నను కార్యాచరణమున నది నిరాశాభంగకరమని (disappointing) గత దశసంవత్సరములుగా గానవచ్చెను. మన మిప్పటి యసమానత్వమును మాన్పుటకు మరియు నెక్కువ వోట్లహక్కుగోరు నీకాలమున మిక్కిలి కష్టప్రయత్నములు గావించవలెను; లేనిచో ప్రభుత్వమువారిచే గమనింపబడిన హెచ్చుతగ్గులు, వారియొక్క రాజకీయసాంఘిక స్థానములకు ప్రతిఘాతములుగ నగును గనుక గవర్నమెంటువారిని స్త్రీవిద్యకై విధానముల మఱియు నెక్కువ యభివృద్ధి చేయునట్లు నిర్బంధింపవలెను. మన కావశ్యకములగు విషయము లనేకములు గలవు. వాటి నొనగూర్చునట్లు ప్రభుత్వమువారిని మనము కోరవలెను. అయితే కార్యానుభవ ధురంధరులై చక్కగా పరిశీలించి ఆర్థికదుస్థితి గల యుక్కాలమున గతె సప్తవర్షములుగ తీర్మానింపబడిన వానిని ముఖ్యవిషయములుగ పరిగణింపవలెను. పెరుగుచున్న శిశువునకు దేహారోగ్యమెంత ముఖ్యమో మనోవృత్తికూడ నంత ముఖ్యముగదా! మన మందఱము, భావిసంతతికి తల్లులుకాబోవు మన బాలికలకు యుక్తవిద్యనొసంగి వారు తమపిల్లల చక్కగా పోషించి వారి దేహమనోసౌఖ్యముల దిద్దగలుగునట్టి విద్య నొసంగవలెను. పాఠశాలలందు వైద్యపుతనిఖీ చేయుటయేగాక పాఠశాలకు సంబంధించి వైద్యాలయముల నేర్పఱచి యందు పిల్లలకు వైద్యము చేయబడునట్లును నిర్బంధింపవలెను. ఇవ్విధమున నింగ్లాండునందు కృషిచేయబడి బహు యాశ్చర్యకరముగు ఫలితము నొందినది. మన భారతీయ బాలికలకు బ్రిటిషు బాలికలకన్న నెక్కువ వైద్యసహాయ మావశ్యకమై యున్నది. అనగా నూటికి 70 వంతు శిశువులకు జాగ్రత్తగా వైద్యసహాయము గావలసియున్నది. ఇట్టి దానితో నిర్బంధప్రాథమిక విద్య నొసంగవలసినది ప్రభుత్వమువారి కర్తవ్యము. ఇట్టిదానికి మనమంత్రులను, వారు దేశక్షేమార్థమై స్త్రీవిద్యయొక్క ప్రాముఖ్యతను గ్రహించి పిల్లల విద్యకొఱకు రెక్కువ ధన సహాయము చేయుటకు నిర్బంధింపవలెను. లోకమునందు భరతఖండము తన యుక్తస్థానమును వహించుటకొఱకు తత్ స్త్రీపురుషులు చక్కగా విద్యావంతులై బ్రతుకుటయే మిక్కిలి ముఖ్యమైనది. ఇప్పటి యీ యసమానత్వమును త్వరగా మాన్పుటకొఱకు ప్రాథమిక పాఠశాలలందు విద్యయే ప్రధానమని చెప్పగలను.

ప్రభుత్వమువారికి మనయొక్క యత్యావశ్యకావసరములను దెలిపి, వారి సహాయముచేత యౌవనులకు (అనగా పెద్దవారైన స్త్రీలకు) విద్యనేర్పుటకు శాలలను, (ట్రావెలింగ లైబ్రరీను) సంచార పుస్తకాగారములను నెలకొల్పుట యుక్తముగును. ఈయువతీవిద్యాలయములందు పాఠశాలల వదలుకొన్న పెద్ద బాలికలను గూడ చేర్చుకొనిన వారు నేర్చుకొన్నవానిని మరచిపోవుటకు వీలుండదు. మఱియు వారితరులకు సహాయము చేయగలుగుదురు. ప్రతి లోకలుకమిటీవారికిని సాధింపదగినదగు ప్రచారలైబ్రరీలు, వ్యాపకలైబ్రరీలు గూడ ముఖ్యమనియే నాయుద్దేశము.

దేహారోగ్యమునకు సత్ప్రవర్తనము లెట్లు ముఖ్యములో మనోసౌఖ్యమునకు సద్విషయములు ముఖ్యములు. విద్యచేత శారీరకాభివృద్ధియు, మనోవృత్తులును, స్మృతిశక్తియు గలుగును. శరీరపరిశ్రమచేయుట ...నొకవిద్యయే. ఇప్పుడు మనము గమనింపదగినవిషయము హిందూదేశము ఫలోత్పాదకశక్తి యుండేల ...తక్కువస్థితిలో నున్నదని. ఈన్యూనతకొక కారణము దేశ శీతోష్ణస్థితులు (climate); అది మనపరిపోషణ

చేతను, కొన్ని ప్రాచీనాచారములచేతను ద్విగుణీకృతమగుచున్నది. పిల్లల యాహారవిహారపానాదులందు గమన ముంచుట తల్లులవిధి. ప్రతిపాఠశాలయందును ఆరోగ్యశాస్త్రము పథ్యశాస్త్రము నిర్బంధవిద్యగ నేర్పవలెను. చక్కగా నియమితమైన పానభోజనాదులచే శరీరమును, శక్తియు నభివృద్ధి గాగలదు. మన దేశమున మిక్కిలి గౌరవకుటుంబములకును, ధనికకుటుంబములకును చెందిన పిల్లలు చదివెడి యొక పాఠశాలలో పిల్లలను పరీక్షింపగా నూటికి ముప్పదినాలుగురంతు కుపరిపోషణచేత వ్యాధిగ్రస్తులైన వారుండిరని తెలిసెను.

మనోభావములను వృత్తులను శిక్షించుటకు చరిత్రలు సహాయపడును. ధైర్యసాహసవంతులును, మన దేశసేవార్థము ప్రాణమునుగూడ త్యజించిన మహాత్ములును సుశీలురునగు వారి చరితల జదువుటవలన పిల్లల మనస్సులం దుత్సాహమేర్పడి తత్తద్భావములు వారిచిత్తముల మొలకలెత్తును. ఆదర్శవంతులగు ప్రజాత్వము చేతను, సేవచేతను నది సాధింపవచ్చు. అమూల్యవిషయముల నావరించు శక్తి మనస్సునకు కలుగజేయవలెను. మన పిల్లలకు మనముగోరు పాదర్శమేమనగా వారియొక్క మానసిక నైతిక ఆధ్యాత్మికజ్ఞానముల నంకురింప జేసి యవి వారిజీవితమునకు తోడ్పడజేయుటయే.

మనము తీర్మానములగాంచి ప్రభుత్వమువా రద్దానిని చేయునట్లు గోరుకొనవలెను. అయినను మనప్రస్తుత పరిస్థితియందు పూర్తిగా నితరులపై నాధారపడియుండక మనము కొంతకొంతగా ప్రారంభించుచునే యుండవలెను. స్కూల్ యునిన్‌స్పెక్టరులలో పలువురు కచ్చేరిరివాజు (Red tapism) వలన చాల వెనుకులాడెదరు. వారిని నాదరించి వారివిషయమున నన్ని శాఖాధికారులను కలిసి యాకార్యము నెరవేర్చుకొనుటకు వెనుదీయక పనిచేయవలెను. లోకలు కమిటీ మెంబర్లు, ఉపాధ్యాయినీలతోను ఇన్స్పెక్ట్రెసులతోను పరిచయము గలిగించుకొని సెకండరీవిద్యను నభివృద్ధిచేయవలెను. మనతీర్మానములరీతిని స్కూలు బోధనాపద్ధతిని పాఠ్యగ్రంథములను (curriculam) మార్పు ప్రయత్నములు గావింపవలెను. మఱికొంతశ్రమచేత పెద్దపట్టణములందు విద్యాపిల్ములు గూడ తయారుచేసి ప్రదర్శింపవచ్చును. ఇటువంటి కొన్ని ఘనకార్యములందు విద్యాసంఘముల యఖిలభారతీయ సమితివారితోను లేక వేఱు లోకల్ విద్యాసమాజమువారితోను గలిసి కృషి చేయవలెను.

సమావేశములజరిపి తీర్మానములుమాత్రము చేయుటతోనే మనము దాటిపోయితిమి. ఇప్పుడు క్రియారూపముగ కార్యములు నడుపుటయే ముఖ్యము. దీనికి మిక్కిలి మనమము గావలయును. విద్యయను విషయము సకలాంశములందును చక్కగా నాలోచింపబడలేదు. పాశ్చాత్యవిధానములం దేదియుత్తమమో యేదియుక్తమో, మేలయినదో పరిశీలించి దానిని మన భారతీయవిజ్ఞానముతో పోల్చిచూచి మన ప్రస్తుత జీవితమునకనుగుణముగునట్లుగా కొన్నిటినిమార్చుకొని యాచరించవలెను. గృహశాస్త్రశిక్షణకొఱకు స్థాపింపబడిన లేడీ ఇర్విన్ కాలేజీ బాలికా విద్యావిధానమున కత్యంతావసరముగ దోచినది. మన విద్యకు భంగకారిగనుండు కొన్ని యంశములను పరిశీలించి చక్కబెట్టుకొనుట మిక్కిలి మంచిది. (సశేషము)

పతివ్రత

పంచమవేద మనఁబరఁగు మహాభారతము తెలుఁగనివా రుండరు. అందు ప్రఖ్యాతివ్యక్తులలో నీమె యొకర్తు. పార్థశాఖీభేయ మహాసాధ్వి. మహాభాగ. పతివ్రతాధర్మముల పరిశీలించి పరమావధి గాన పరమేశ్వరుఁడుగ దలఁచి భర్తనే దైవముగా భావించి త్రికరణశుద్ధితో నాతని గొలుచుచు శుశ్రూష చేయుచుండెను.

ఆ కాలమున కౌశికుఁడను నొక బ్రాహ్మణపుంగవుఁ డుండెను. అతఁడు పరమవైరాగ్యశీలుఁడు, తపస్సంపన్నుఁడు, జితేంద్రియుఁడు. కాని క్రోధపిశాచమున కాతఁడు తనలో కొంత చోటొసంగియుండెను. అతఁ డొక్కఁడును నొకనాఁ డొక వృక్షచ్ఛాయను విశ్రమించి వేదపారాయణ మొనరించుచుండఁగా నా చెట్టు కొమ్మ యందుండిన నొక కొంగ యాతనిపై యుచ్ఛిష్టము చేసెను. అంత కౌశికుఁడు క్రోధారుణనేత్రుఁడై కొంగను తేరిపార జూచినంత నది కిందఁబడి మడిసెను. కౌశికుఁడు నిష్కారణముగ నిరపరాధియైన విహంగమును నిర్దాక్షిణ్యముగ దన కోపాగ్ని కాహుతి గావించి ఘోరపాతక మెంచిగట్టుకొన్నందులకు పశ్చాత్తాపతప్తుఁడై యచ్చోటు వాసి భిక్షాటనమున కరిగెను.

ఆ నాఁ డెందును భిక్ష దొరకమి నెలపునకు పరుగుచు నాతఁడు పతివ్రతాగృహము చేరెను. ఆమెయు నభ్యాగతునిం గని సంతసించి పూజించి, 'అయ్యా! దయచేయుఁడు, మా రాకచే నేఁడు మా గృహము పావన మయ్యెను. ఇట విశ్రమింపుఁడు. ఇదిగో తమకు భిక్ష తెచ్చెద' నని వినయపూర్వకముగ నమస్కరించి పలికి లోనికేగెను. ఇంతలో నామె భర్త కార్యార్థమై చాల దూరమేగి, యత్యంతాయాసముతో మరలివచ్చెను. అది విలోకించి యామె తొలుత నాతనికి వలసిన యుపచారాదు లాచరింపసాగెను. అది గాంచి కౌశికుఁ డామె తనను నిర్లక్ష్యము చేసి భర్తకు పరిచర్య చేయుచున్నదని దురభిప్రాయపడి, దుర్వారకోపాతిరేకంబున నామెం దిలకించి శపింప గమకింపఁగా, నా పతివ్రతామతల్లి యాతని యింగిత మెఱిఁగి, మృదుమధురంబున వినయవాక్యంబుల నిట్లనియె. 'మునీంద్రా! నీ కింతకోపము తగదు. నీ కోపమునకు భీతిల్లుదానను గాను. అందున నా కణుమాత్రమైన హాని చేకూరదు. నీవంటి తపస్సంపన్నుల మహాత్మ్యము లెఱిఁగినదానను. అరిషడ్వర్గముల జయించి జితేంద్రియుఁడై మనవలసిన నీవంటివారికి క్రోధము కాలానలసదృశమగును. ఎవ్వఁడు క్రోధపిశాచమును జయింప సమర్థుఁడో వాఁడే యోగి, వాఁడే దాంతుఁడు, వాఁడే బ్రహ్మానందసుఖభోగి. క్రోధ మెట్టివారికైన ముప్పు దెచ్చును. శాంతము లేక సౌఖ్యము లేదని వినమే? శాంతము సర్వాంగశోభనాకరము. సర్వక్లేశహారి. సదానందదాయకము. ప్రత్యక్షశత్రువనఁదగు క్రోధము నెవఁ డంతరింపఁజేసి సత్యవ్రతుఁడై సకలజీవదయాపరుఁడై మెలఁగునో యాతఁడే బ్రాహ్మణుఁడు, జ్ఞానవంతుఁడు. అపకారికి ప్రత్యపకారము చేయక, జితేంద్రియుఁడై సదాచారనిరతుఁడై యుండువాఁడే బ్రహ్మజ్ఞానార్హుఁడు. 'ఆత్మవత్సర్వభూతాని యః పశ్యతి స పశ్యతి' అను వచనము వినమే. సకల భూతములను తనవలెనే సంభావించి భేదాభేదములను పాటింపకుండుట శ్రేయము. అట్టివారి మతమే నిత్యసత్యసమ్మతమగు మతము. కాని యీవు క్రోధాతిరేకంబున నుదయమున కొంగను చంపినట్లుగా, ఇప్పుడు నన్ను బెదరించుట బ్రాహ్మణలక్షణము గాదు. నీ కోపము నన్నేమియు చేయఁజాలదు. నేనేమి కొంగను గాను. 'అహింసా పరమో ధర్మః' అన వినలేదే. అట్లుండ వేదవేదివగు

నీవీలీల కఠినాంతరంగుఁడవై యుండుట ధర్మమే? నీ కింకను ఇంద్రియజయత్వము చాలదు. అరిషడ్వర్గములకు లోబడువాఁ డేవిధమున నాత్మజ్ఞుఁడగును. మఱియు నీ వడిగినంత భిక్ష పెట్టక నాలసించితినని గదా నీకు నాపై కినుక గలిగెను. పతివ్రతలకు పతిశుశ్రూషయే పరమోత్తమము. భర్తల సంతృప్తి జేసిన పతివ్రతలు భగవంతుని సంతృప్తి జేసినవా రగుదురు. నా పతి యత్యాయాసముతో నిలు సేరియుండ చూచి నేనుపేక్ష చేయజాల, అది పరమపాతకము. ప్రథమత భర్తసేవజేసి తర్వాత నతిథిసేవ జేయవలసినది నా విధిగాదే? అంతలో నీ కీయాగ్రహమేల, నిన్ను నే మఱచితి ననుకొంటివా? లేదులేదు. అతిథులు భగవత్స్వరూపులు గారే? ఏయింట నభ్యాగతులు పూజింపబడుదురో నాయింట దేవతలు నివసింపరే? సత్పతియు నతిథిసేవాపరాయణుండు గావున మే మిరువురము గలసి నీ కొనర్చు పరిచర్యల పరిగ్రహించి జనవలయునని సప్రణామముగా వేడుకొనగా నా కౌశికుం డిట్లనియె.

'అమ్మా! నీ మహిమ యిట్టిదని నే నెఱుంగనైతిని. ఎందో జచ్చిన కొంగసంగతి నాకు దప్ప నెవరికిం దెలియదు. అది నీవు దెలిసియుంట ఆశ్చర్యకరము. ఇట్టి మహోన్నతశక్తి సంపన్నురాలవగు నీ పరశక్తి స్వరూపిణివని వేరుగ జెప్పవలయునా? కావున దయయుంచి నాకు సద్ధర్మము నుపదేశించి యనుగ్రహింపుము.' అనగా విని యమ్మహాపతివ్రత, అయ్యా! బ్రాహ్మణోత్తమా! నీకు ధర్మముల నుపదేశింపగల దేశికుఁడున్నాఁడు. వినుము, మిథిలానగరమున ధర్మవ్యాధుఁడను కటికవాఁడొకఁడున్నాఁడు. అతఁడు వృత్తిని వదలకయే సమస్త ధర్మపారంగతుఁడై కులదీపకుఁడై విలసిల్లుచున్నాఁడు. అతని కడకేగి సద్ధర్మోపదేశముల బడయుమని యానతిచ్చెను.

పతివ్రత వాక్యముల తెలివొంది కౌశికుఁడు తన దురహంకారమున కెంతయు సిగ్గువడి, పరితపించి యా యమ సద్బోధమున కాత్మ సంతసించి ధర్మవ్యాధునొద్ద కరిగెను.

ఆహా! పతివ్రతల మహత్త్వము! బహుకాలము కాయకష్టములకోర్చి కాయగసురులు మెసవి తపమాచరించి బడయఁగల జ్ఞానము, పరివ్రాజకులై పలుదేశములు తిరిగి, పలుపుర స్నాశ్రయించి పలుకక మౌనవ్రతమూని బడయు విజ్ఞానము, పలుసంవత్సరములు త్రేతాగ్నులమధ్యను, హిమపన్నగ గర్భములందును పరమాత్మధ్యానమత్తులై బడయు పరమజ్ఞానము, ఇల్లే కోవెలగ నెంచి, పతియే దైవమని గొలుచు శీలవతులగు పతివ్రతలకు కరతలామలకము లగునుగదా!

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